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Great Britain Commons, House of

HEADS

OF THE

SPEECHES,

DELIVERED

On the 18th and 19th APRIL, 1791,

IN A

COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

ON A MOTION

MADE BY MR. WILBERFORCE,

FOR THE

ABOLITION

OF THE

SLAVE-TRADE,

WITH

DETECTOR'S LETTERS, &c.

LIVERPOOL:

PRINTED IN THE YEAR, MDCC XCI.



HEADS OF THE SPEECHES, &c.

MR. Wilberforce said, that notwithstanding the attention which he had for several years paid to the subject, notwithstanding his acquaintance with the evidence, he felt himself on the present occasion oppressed with a sense of his own inability to do justice to the task he had undertaken. Undoubtedly this was for him an awful and important crisis, which brought to an issue a question which had occupied so much of his time and labour, and in which his wishes were so deeply interested. Justice, however, would be done to the motives of his conduct, whatever was its result. It would be believed that something more than inducements of common humanity had prompted the perseverance of so many years. It would be believed that he had acted upon more solid grounds, and been animated by a higher principle than merely a desire to abolish a practice, which was painful to his feelings. He regretted that he had brought on the general question, instead, as formerly, of moving resolutions. This mode of procedure he had been led to adopt, in consequence of the wishes of those friends with whom he was connected in the business, to whose opinions he considered himself as bound to pay some regard. He would endeavour, however, as much as possible, in the discussion, to follow up the question point by point, as he was convinced that an accurate investigation of particulars was all that was wanted to prove the propriety of abolishing the Slave Trade, not only from motives of humanity, but from considerations of policy. In what he had to say, he would confine himself to those leading topics which might be the objects of future debate, reserving to himself the liberty, as he should find necessary in the debate, of entering into a more full detail, or explanation. In treating the subject, he should endeavour to preserve the utmost coolness and candour, separating, as much as possible, persons from facts,

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facts, and at the same time acknowledging his obligations to the very honourable and polite treatment which he had experienced from those who were of an opposite way of thinking to himself, who had always shown to him the highest regard and deference, a proof that they were willing that the trade should be abandoned, if they could be convinced that the measure was practicable. He had always considered an appeal to general feelings as a sufficiently fair criterion of the propriety of abolishing the Slave Trade. Such an appeal must be strongly enforced by an examination of the evidence, which the subject afforded. He should first call the attention of the House to the mode which was employed in obtaining Slaves.---Conceive a vast extent of territory, chiefly under the influence of petty Princes and great men, urged by their strongest appetites to a practice which was always in their power, and reflect, whether in pursuing it they will be much apt to be influenced by regard to any principle of morality or nicety of mode. Some stress was to be laid upon the evidence of those from whom they had acquired their information of particular facts. They were some of them persons acquainted with the country, and who had opportunities of being acquainted with the circumstances, which they related from their own observation; they had some of them been engaged in the trade, and though now entirely unconnected with it, might still be supposed to retain a prejudice in its favour. If they went up so far as Senegal, they had the evidence of Capt. Wilson and Capt. Hills. It appeared there, that the most common mode of obtaining Slaves was, for a Chief to send out a party by night, who seized forcibly upon those whom they could find, and marked their progress with desolation. The unhappy victims of their rapine were delivered up to the English, and consigned by their own countrymen, from the vilest considerations of interest, to all the horrors of slavery. There was a material difference in the testimony of these two gentlemen; the one had been in the country while the trade was carrying on, when he had an opportunity of observing the practice; the other had been in the country at a time when there were no ships there, at which time the practice did not prevail, a clear proof that it was only adopted for the purposes of this infamous traffic. At Gambia Capt. Hills wanted a black boy,

boy. He applied to a Broker, who beckoned to some boys, who were playing, and when Captain Hill's expressed his disapprobation of the intention, which he intimated, of seizing one of them, seemed to consider it entirely as a matter of course, and was quite astonished that he could have any objection. General Rooke used to be visited by a body of negroes, who enjoyed themselves in the society of the English with the utmost confidence and familiarity. A proposal was made to him by some of the brokers to carry them off as slaves. When he, in the strongest manner, disapproved of so flagrant a violation of justice and breach of confidence, they treated it entirely as a common practice, and seemed surprised that any doubts could be entertained of its propriety. When the common mode of obtaining Slaves was attended with any difficulty, it was usual to go among them furnished with a quantity of brandy and gunpowder, in order to incite the poor wretches to war, to sow among them the seeds of dissension and fury, and to furnish them with the implements of mutual destruction. The design was to obtain as Slaves those who should be taken in war, to make a property of calamity, and drive a trade of carnage and desolation. The persons who were engaged in these practices had become so hackneyed in the business, as to be insensible of their enormity, and callous to every common feeling of humanity.

Evidence had been produced of those who had seen villages deserted and desolated, in consequence of this human rapine. Orders had been ascertained to have been given to bring in Slaves by these methods of violence and injustice. But should he enter into the detail of evidence, he would be under the necessity of pursuing the same dull dry narrative through a train of facts too numerous to come under one point of view. He should therefore content himself with referring to them, as occasion demanded, in the course of the debate. Inferences might be drawn of some importance to the decision of the question, and no small stress in the present case was to be laid on circumstantial evidence. The number of children who were carried off in the course of the trade was considerable. By the evidence against them, it was asserted, that no children were allowed to be taken into slavery, except those whose parents had been found guilty of witchcraft,

witchcraft. Of these it was proved that the number was very few, so that many of those children must have been carried off by indirect means. Indeed the West Indian Gentlemen, and those concerned in the trade, could not help allowing, in answer to enquiries which had been made, that such means were employed in carrying on the trade. Governor Parry's letter forcibly expressed an indignation, which he found himself unable longer to suppress, against practices so nefarious, contrary to every principle of justice, and every feeling of humanity.--- Every engine was set to work, in order to promote the purposes of this barbarous traffic. The sanctity of justice itself was perverted. Slavery was imposed as the punishment of every slight offence, and fines were exacted which the criminal could not pay, as a pretext for his being sold. In a country like this, that enjoyed the benefit of equal laws and regular policy, it might be seen what mischief would arise in a situation where these advantages were not possessed, from a perversion of the common principles of justice. The Slave Captains, it had been proved, practised upon the negroes every species of fraud, and stooped to every act of meanness, for the purpose of dishonest gain. All this they considered as perfectly justifiable in the way of trade, and the advantages so obtained as merely a return of just profit. This might at least shew what was the principle of the trade, and what sort of persons were deemed qualified to carry it on. It becomes necessary for those Gentlemen who are connected with the trade, to disavow their knowledge of such proceedings, and vindicate, from aspersions so dishonourable, the fairness of dealings so essential to the mercantile character. He quoted the evidence of a Gentleman who had spoken in the Assembly of Jamaica, who, while he opposed the abolition of the trade, had reprobated the methods by which it was carried on, and treated as a delusion the idea that those who were sold into slavery had been only such as were convicted of crimes. Notwithstanding, all which had been alledged. Notwithstanding the numerous cloud of witnesses, the powerful voice of reason, and the concurring testimony of experience, all the circumstances which he had now mentioned had been expressly denied. The evidence, however, brought forward for this purpose, without any personal allusion

allusion from the situation in which they stood, were surely the most improper. They were either Governors of forts, or Captains who were engaged in the trade, whose feelings might be supposed to be blunted by their familiarity with the business, and whose judgments were entirely under the influence of those prejudices which it had a tendency to produce. Their testimony was considerably weakened by the inconsistencies into which they were betrayed, and the absurdity and insufficiency of the conclusions which they attempted to draw from the premises. They would not allow that any mischief had occurred, or any impropriety had been committed in the trade, even by accident. No, it was perfectly impossible; a trade which is founded in a manifest violation of the first principles of justice, had been conducted with the strictest decorum, and regulated upon principles of the most cautious policy, prompted by a spirit of the most refined humanity. Mr. Barnes declared, that it was perfectly impossible that any who were sold into slavery should have been falsely convicted. As well might it be said, that it was impossible for the King of this country, by exercising any traffic of which he was in possession, to obtain a commodity of which he should be desirous from another nation. There was another circumstance which deserved to be remarked. In order to prove the disadvantages under which the Negroes laboured in their own country, it was urged, that the country was in a wild and barbarous state, that justice was on a footing of total insecurity, and that nothing could be more precarious than the lives and properties of its miserable inhabitants. But when it was found necessary to shift the ground, immediately it appeared that what not all the regulations of legislative policy, not all the discernment of judicial wisdom, not all the caution of impartial justice could effect in the most civilized countries, there could be no such thing as a false conviction; nay such was the security which they enjoyed from the assaults of violence, from the machinations of fraud, that there had not even occurred a single instance of kidnapping. Surely, surely, accounts so opposite from the same mouth, carried with them an air of contradiction, and could only be accounted for from the influence of an African climate. Indeed, there was a certain atmosphere which Gentlemen carried about with

with them, which prevented them from seeing things as they really were, which placed them all in one point of view, and allowed them only to be surveyed through the same medium. There was one convenience in this atmosphere, it presented to a man the object only in the most desirable light, and did not oblige him to see any thing against his own interest. Mr. Barnes, on a different occasion, seemed to be influenced by the same African habit of thinking.

When he was examined about the wine trade, in which he had been engaged, and asked if he knew any thing of the practice of adulteration?

No---he had never heard of such a thing; he could give no account of it; it was not even possible for him to form a notion that such a thing could be practised. He would by no means insinuate, that Mr. Barnes could be acquainted with the thing from his own practice; but surely he must have heard of it, nor could it be to him such a matter of extreme difficulty as he pretended to conceive, that it existed. But indeed, whatever mal-practices are committed in Africa, those who are engaged in the trade take care that they shall not at all be conscious of the villainy. It is the grand maxim of the African Captains never to enquire into the mode of obtaining a Slave. He is offered to sale by the Broker; they purchase him, and the bargain is concluded with perfect fairness on their part. No matter though the Broker should be seen in the very act of violence and injustice; no matter though he should have been employed by them, to serve the interests of their inhuman traffic by carnage and depredation. They see nothing; they know nothing; they can give no account of the matter; their business consists merely in making the purchase, and their share of the transaction terminates when that is concluded. Since such is their grand maxim, every idea of information from this quarter is merely a delusion. It would be difficult indeed to learn from men what it is their interest to conceal, and their determination not to know. And in consequence of this system, only two instances of mal-practice, we are told, have occurred within fifty years. As a proof that the Captains are concerned in kidnapping, the natives are alarmed whenever a Slave-ship makes its appearance, and take care to keep at a distance from the coast; but on the contrary, upon the arrival of a King's ship, they flock down in great numbers

numbers to welcome them, go aboard with the utmost confidence, and whilst they remain, associate with the crew upon terms of the most easy familiarity, and strictest intimacy. The mode of obtaining the Slaves, indeed, carried every where alarm and danger, marked its path with carnage, and left behind it the monuments of ruin and desolation. But painful as this view of the subject might seem, the next stage was still worse. Of their treatment on board ship he had on a former occasion spoke so fully, as to render little necessary to be now added. It could not be requisite to point out the hardships which they suffered from the narrow space in which they were crowded, in a climate, the heat of which was intolerable. Could the House be transported to view their sum of general misery---could it enter into every tale of individual woe, his task would then become unnecessary; feeling would supersede all force of argument, or eloquence of persuasion; every heart and voice would concur in the abolition of a measure, which barely to witness, must melt the bosom with pity, and thrill the veins with horror.--- The sufferings of these unhappy wretches are strongly marked by the phrase which is employed when any have been enabled to throw themselves over-board; "They have escaped." To effectuate this purpose every opportunity is sought, every artifice is studied. Time is watched, and invention wrecked, in order to obtain death, the last refuge of misery, the best friend of despair. The Slave who is happy to succeed in his purpose, exults in the agonies of death, smiles amidst the convulsions of struggling nature, and holds up with desperate effort his expiring arms, to witness the transport of escape from misery, and the triumph which he has obtained over the avarice and cruelty of his persecutors. Yet the persons who are concerned in the trade tell us that they sleep with comfort. In order to sleep with comfort, it would seem necessary that they should at least have room to lay on their backs. Yet the person who tells us that they can sleep with comfort, has informed us that he at one time had 333 Slaves in a vessel of 120 tons, when they could not lay on their backs; and at another upwards of 440, in a vessel of 108 tons; yet all this while they sleep with comfort; they suffer no inconvenience from the narrow space; they are exposed to no infection from the excessive number who are crowded together

together; a space of fourteen inches and a half is sufficient for all the purposes of ease and health to a human being; nay, it is sufficient for the repose and slumber of human misery. Prevented from drowning themselves, by the watchful cares of avarice, and the conscious suspicions of cruelty, they wish to starve themselves. They must be whipt in order to accept that food which is necessary to support life. It appeared in the evidence, that a Captain had caused a yam to be presented to a Slave in one hand, and a hot coal in the other. The resolution of the slave was overcome by the pressure of immediate pain; he threw away the coal and accepted the yam, and the Captain congratulated himself upon the artifice of ingenious cruelty. Yet it had been said, that their situation in our colonies was preferable to their mode of living in their own country. The fact was not true. At home their Slaves were only vassals, eat along with their masters, were not allowed to be punished, worked but little, and in fine enjoyed all the ease and comfort which are consistent with a rude state of society. The Negroes had, on different occasions, shewn themselves capable of exertions of genius, and in no respect indicated any inferiority to any other race of men. The idea that they were in any respect different from ourselves was absurd; the belief that God had marked them out as objects of his vengeance, if serious, was really to be pitied; and, if otherwise, could not be too severely reprobated. But it had been asserted by those against, that the Trade was necessary to the preservation of our West-Indian possessions. When he made use of the phrase "those against," he desired to be understood to do it only by way of distinction. All, he was convinced, had but one heart and one voice upon the subject, and would most cheerfully concur in abandoning the trade, if they could be shewn that it was practicable. To him, in the present case, no object of interest could form any consideration. But if it could be proved, that even in a political point of view, instead of being pernicious, the abolition of the trade would be highly useful; if he should even at present succeed in proving that it was not ruinous, he should consider that he had gained a point, and should think himself entitled to call for the abolition of the trade. The present question, he remarked, had been injured by being frequently agitated with too much acrimony.

acrimony. That acrimony had never existed in his mind. He had separated general causes and effects. He had acquitted the intentions and dispositions of those who were concerned in the Trade. While he had regretted the tendency of all power to lead to abuse, he, at the same time acknowledged with the greatest pleasure, that by some it had been employed for the noblest purpose, the happiness of their fellow-creatures. The causes of the decrease of Slaves were numerous and extensive in their operation, and yet he would take upon him to affirm, that no actual decrease had taken place. Slavery had a tendency to debase and degrade the character, to sink the man in the scale of creation. In the absence of the owners of property, Slaves were apt to be treated by their Managers with harshness and severity. They were pinched in their food, over-burthened with work, and punished with rigour. In short they experienced all the ill usage which could be dictated by low minds influenced by the most fordid motives. He here recurred to the most respectable evidence, to confirm his account of the treatment of slaves. They were in general not sufficiently fed. The proportion of food allowed them in different islands, so very unequal, clearly proved that this must be the case, and the influence of a good or bad crop, upon their appearance, showed that the stipulated quantity of provisions was not sufficient. They were neglected in point of medical care. One man only was entrusted with the charge of the health of eight or nine thousand, a number which rendered it quite impossible to pay all of them the requisite attention.

They were not less neglected in point of religious and moral instruction, even while it was allowed that it would be attended with the most beneficial consequences. They were left to the pernicious indulgence of habits of intemperance, and early prostitution. No attempt was made to season their minds with principles of piety, or improve their conduct by moral precepts; though the advantages of such a system must be perceived by the effects produced on some of the Negroes, by the arrival of certain sectaries. All those who had received their instructions, had improved so much as to have doubled their value to their masters. Besides, they did not enjoy legal protection; and in consequence of this exclusion from the common privileges of

society, were considered as objects of degradation and contempt. Wherever power is possessed, it is apt to be exercised with cruelty. Such cruelty ought never to be suffered to pass unpunished.

It had not been considered or understood, that Negroes were entitled to the protection of the common law. As a proof, an express statute was provided to render offences against them punishable. In the case of a master, who had cut the mouth of a child almost from ear to ear, the verdict given was, guilty, if immoderate correction of a slave be a crime.

In the detail of this part of his speech, he frequently referred to the authority of Mr. Long, for which he professed the highest respect. In their treatment of Slaves, indeed, they did not consider it so much an object to keep up the breed, as to make as large crops as possible. Every body who came from the country was well acquainted with planting, and the produce of estates, but none seem to have made the poor black part of their species, an object of their attention. Not even medical men were able to ascertain the number of males and females born, though none seemed better qualified to satisfy any enquiries relative to the best mode of raising and conducting plantations. He proceeded to make some remarks on the evidence against the Abolition.

The evidence given by persons of high rank had extended through a series of 30 or 40 years, during all which they declared that nothing could be better than the established system, and it was impossible that any improvement could be made; yet had these very persons allowed, that of late years the treatment of slaves had been much amended. They are entirely ignorant of the circumstance upon which, indeed, depends the Abolition of the Trade, whether it would be possible to keep up the breed without it. It was but lately that the murder of a slave had become a capital offence, a circumstance which was regarded in the country as a complete alteration of the system of government. He refuted the idea that the condition of a slave in the West Indies is preferable to that of a peasant in this country. He showed the extreme desire of liberty and the high sense of its blessings which attended the Slaves even to the last moments of their lives. He asserted, that in spite of all the causes of decrease,

decrease, the number of Slaves had really been increasing; and adduced a variety of evidence, and a number of facts, in order to prove this growing population. In this detail, he had occasion frequently to quote the authority of Mr. Ross and Dr. Anderson. He stated the amazing progress of population in those places, where any one of the causes of decrease had ceased to operate, and inferred how much greater success might be expected from a still milder system of treatment. He again returned to the evidence of Mr. Hercules Ross, whom he never could mention but with the greatest respect, and whose information merited every degree of praise that could be bestowed upon it.--- Mr. Wilberforce said, one great source of opposition arose from the effect which it was supposed an abolition of the Slave Trade would have upon the trade of Liverpool and Bristol; but he had heard nothing, nor had his opponents brought forward any proof to convince him that any injurious consequence would follow, or that the capitals of the merchants, or the industry of the inhabitants of these towns, would be anywise diminished. The Guinea Trade he considered as a lottery at best, where, perhaps, one might gain twenty thousand pounds, but take the whole of the adventurers, and they would be found losers; and he did not suppose if the account of profit and loss was balanced, that the merchants of Liverpool and Bristol, or the country at large, were gainers by this horrid and inhuman trade.

Those who opposed the measure, had stated the exports from these places by the Slave Trade, as amounting, the one to 700,000*l.* and the other to 500,000*l.* but upon examining the report laid before the Committee, the exports from Liverpool amounted only to 400,000*l.* and a great part of that, shocked he was to say it, arose from the article of gunpowder, which was transported to these unhappy wretches for the destruction of one another.

He then argued, that as to general commerce, he was certain that it could not be affected in any degree by the abolition. He paid many compliments to Mr. Irvine, whose reports and candid information he often referred to, and never without mentioning him in the handsomest terms. He contended, that whatever might be said to the contrary, nothing short of a total abolition could answer the purposes of humanity or justice; and any regulation

lation short of that would be nugatory and only disgust them, and be of bad rather than good consequence to the West India islands.

With regard to the good treatment which some gentlemen said the Slaves met with from their masters, he could neither agree that it was so, or that it happened so seldom as not to be put in comparison with the cruelties and harshness, instances of which were too crowded in the minutes to be brought before the House in detail. And the principle that they were well treated, because it was the interest of the proprietors that they should be so, was a very fallacious one, especially when it was known to whose management they were left, and how often the real proprietor was absent, and knew nothing about them. The abolition of slavery was the only way to increase the population, which he would prove, had always increased in proportion to the mildness and humanity with which they had been treated; and instanced the different estates in Antigua and Jamaica, from whence his proofs were established; after which he thought it was needless to add the distinction that was occasioned by the masters being absent, and the trust of management left to ignorant and cruel overseers, who were both the judges and the executioners of punishment upon Slaves who offended them. But after all, if it could be proved, that we gained something by the Slave Trade, he hoped this country never would acknowledge gold to be so much her God, as to blot out justice, humanity, and freedom, from the catalogue of her virtues. It had been stated, that if we were to relinquish that trade, other nations would continue it, and profit by our imprudence; but to that argument he never would yield, because he did not believe that any other country would take it up. On the contrary, he thought they would glory in having our example to abolish the very name of such a trade from their commerce.

Mr. Wilberforce having spoken considerably above three hours, he summed up his arguments by a most pathetic, eloquent, and serious address to the passions and feelings of the House; after which he concluded by moving, "That the Chairman be directed to move for leave to bring in a Bill to prevent the further importation of Negroes from the Coast of Africa, to any of his Majesty's Colonies or Plantations abroad."

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Col. Tarleton, after a handsome exordium, said,---
 " Gratitude for the kindness of my Constituents, who sent me so honourably to this House, as well as a thorough conviction of the justice of their cause, impels me to vindicate their character and property, though perhaps from inexperience or inability I may not be able to accomplish what I so ardently desire. Many eminent speakers will, no doubt, deliver their sentiments on this question, which, during four years, has attracted the attention of the empire, and which has been so thoroughly investigated within these walls. Their information, ability, and eloquence will give dignity and consequence to what *they* advance; I therefore shall not be so anxious to detain the House as to express my statements and opinions with consistent brevity. The ingenuity, the amplification, and the pathetic eloquence of the honourable Gentleman who had just sat down, having communicated no conviction to my mind, I shall proceed to arrange, as clearly as I can, my arguments against the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

So many branches of our Commerce are connected and interwoven with this question, that it will be necessary to make many statements, form several calculations, and read various extracts to elucidate the matter. Throughout the whole of what I have to say, I shall aim more at perspicuity than embellishment, and labour rather to convince the mind than bewilder the imagination.

Before I enter on any part of this subject, I think it necessary for the sake of clearness, and to prove to Gentlemen that I do not mean to elude or blink any strong part of the question, to enumerate the different heads on which I am about to speak---I shall state the origin of the Trade---The sanction given to it by Government---The manner of conducting it on the Coast of Africa---The transit to the West Indies---The employment and treatment of the Negroes in the West Indies---The amount of the property engaged in the Trade---The value of the Colonies to Great Britain---The eagerness foreign Nations have discovered to enlarge their Slave Trade---And the Importance of the African Trade, as a nursery for Seamen.

As far back as the year 1553, the English, notwithstanding the claim of the Portuguese Court to an exclusive trade, extended their Commerce to the Coast of Africa.

ca. In 1572, " The Portuguese, finding they could not
 " hold all the Coast solely to themselves, made a Treaty
 " with the English, by which all former disputes were
 " adjusted---and freedom of Trade thither was stipulated
 " with England." ---Vide 2d vol. p. 137, last edition of
Anderson on Commerce. We find about the 30th of ELI-
 ZABETH, (" The nation being then at war with Spain
 " and Portugal) a Company was established, with exclu-
 " sive privileges, for the better discovering and carrying
 " on the Trade with Senegal and Gambia."

I shall barely mention the establishment of another
 Company, and the circumstance of the trade being thrown
 open during the civil wars, when the Dutch and Danes
 did considerable injury to our factories on the Coast of
 Africa. I shall likewise pass over the encouragement and
 protection given to the African Trade by *Oliver Crom-
 well*, the great founder of the Navigation Act, and pro-
 ceed to the third settlement, which took place in the year
 1662,---" The English American Plantations were by
 " this time so much cultivated and improved, that the de-
 " mand for servants and labourers was greatly increased,
 " and as their mother country could by no means afford
 " numbers sufficient for their supply, and that they were
 " not then so well supplied with Negroes from the Afri-
 " can Coast as they wished, since the Trade thither had
 " been laid open, a third exclusive African or Guinea
 " Company was in this year, 1662, incorporated for that
 " end, at the head of which, was his Royal Highness the
 " Duke of York, joined with many persons of rank and
 " distinction." *Anderson on Commerce*, vol. 2. p. 472.

Under the last mentioned patent, the Trade continued
 till 1697,---" When *Parliament* taking the African Trade
 " into consideration, thought proper to lay it open for
 " thirteen years; imposing at the same time a duty of 10
 " per cent. *ad valorem* on all goods and merchandize ex-
 " ported to Africa during that period.

" At the end of this period however, the Company
 " were divested of their charter entirely, after having re-
 " ceived some compensation from Government towards
 " their expenditures on forts and other matters. And in
 " consideration of the trade being laid open to *all* his
 " Majesty's subjects, the *Parliament* allowed the sum of
 " 10,000l. per annum to be vested in certain merchants
 " for

"for the support of forts and castles for the public service." These letters patent have since been confirmed by the 25th of George II. Thus has it continued ever since; the Trade being carried on by private merchants, from London, Bristol, and other parts, but principally from Liverpool.

Having stated the origin and progress of the Trade, I could wish to impress gentlemen strongly with the recollection of the sanction it has obtained from government. I could cite many passages from history, which prove how sacred private property has ever been esteemed in all well regulated governments. I shall, however, confine myself to our own country, and select two great authorities belonging to this House

In a celebrated literary production, page 230---"That justice is itself the great standing policy of civil society; and any eminent departure from it, under any circumstances, lies under the suspicion of being no policy at all. When men are encouraged to go into a certain mode of life by the existing laws, and protected in that mode as in a lawful occupation; when they have accommodated all their ideas and all their habits to it; when the law had long made their adherence to its rules a ground of reputation, and their departure from them a ground of disgrace, and even of penalty; I am sure it is unjust in legislature, by an arbitrary act, to offer a sudden violence to their minds and feelings: forcibly to degrade them from their state and condition, and to stigmatize with shame and infamy that character, and those customs, which before had been made the measure of their happiness and honour."

To prove myself divested of any party bias in the consideration and discussion of this important question, I shall select another weighty authority from the other side of this House.

The Right Hon. Chancellor of the Exchequer once delivered an axiom, the observance of which, (though I acknowledge it appears very difficult) would enhance the reputation of any statesman: "That he ever did and ever would invariably hold the maxim, that private property should be sacred. That no whim, scheme, or measure, ought to be sanctified by Parliament which took away the right of any man, without making compensation

"for

" for the loss." Here, then, I rest this part of the argument, and without any comment, proceed to state

The Manner of conducting the Trade.

I find, on consulting the histories of those times, that the Spaniards and Portuguese, were the first navigators who undertook the African trade; *Alonzo Gonzales*, about the year 1434, first taught his countrymen, the Portuguese, to make slaves of the Africans. This example was soon followed by the Spaniards, and afterwards by the English, and the other nations of Europe.

Captain Hawkins, with the assistance of others, fitted out three ships, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, for the coast of Guinea; and having learned that Negroes yielded a profitable sale at Hispaniola, he took a cargo of Slaves there, and sold them to great advantage.

After this, Negroes were procured by the different European nations, sometimes by stratagem, but in general by barter.

The Slaves that are *now* transported from Africa can only be collected, either by means of the Europeans immediately, or by the intervention of the natives.

When the former collect, they do it by barter, or by sending to the factories either publicly or privately established there. When the latter collect, they make use of those practices which have been established for a long time in Africa. The black traders may be divided into several classes.

Some penetrate a great distance into the country; *others* a lesser one, either by means of the great rivers, or by land; and *some* remain on the coast. The *Negroes* are sometimes travelled 1200 miles before they are embarked, and in their journey pass through a variety of different kingdoms and states.

If, therefore, the African Princes or people objected to the trade, they certainly would oppose the passage of the Slaves; for it is notorious they never allow white traders to settle or reside in the interior parts of the country.

By some people it has been asserted, that the Europeans are active in exciting the natives against one another. By books of travels, and tracts written on Commerce, we find the reverse,

By *La Bus*, *Affley*, *Moore*, and other writers, it is recorded, " That about the close of the last century, a war happened

"happened at Akim, and that this war raged with great fury for four years. That the English, Danish, and Dutch directors did all in their power to accommodate matters, but in vain."

In *Captain Phillips'* voyages, page 308, we learn,---
 "That he received advice from Dick's Cove, that he had best dispose of as much of his cargo as he could, before he came there; because there was no trade nor gold at that place, by reason of the wars, and no probability of procuring a number of slaves on the Gold Coast."

Marchais, Afley, and other writers, take notice of wars and conventions up to the present day: and we find from incontrovertible authorities, that the traders of all the European nations agree, that wars among the African Princes are prejudicial to commerce, and that they do endeavour to act as peace-makers.

Very little variety occurs in the trade. There are some particular customs at particular places.

On the river Sierra Leone there are several private factories belonging to the merchants of Europe, in which their agents, consisting of *white* people, reside.

On the Windward Coast, which reaches from Cape Mount to Cape Palmas, the natives, when they have any Slaves to sell, generally signify it *by fires*.

In some places the trade cannot be carried on without the use of large boats, or shallops, and gold from the Gold Coast.

In the rest, viz. at Whidah, Bonny, Calabar, Benin, and Angola, no such difficulties occur, Gold not being demanded in exchange, particularly at Calabar and Bonny, the greatest markets. The traders there who have a regular communication with the inland parts, get their canoes ready when any vessels arrive. They go up the different rivers into the inland country to attend the fairs. They are generally absent about nine days, and return with 1500 or 2000 slaves.

It is not necessary to argue upon this part of the subject, because it must be obvious, that if the Africans were averse to the trade, the Europeans could not peaceably collect their cargoes in order to transport them to the settlements in America.

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I shall proceed therefore to that part which has afforded such an ample field for conversation, argument, and debate; for letters, pamphlets, and the multitudinous productions of the press; for misrepresentation, obloquy, calumny, and all the excesses of fanatic frenzy--I mean

The Transit to America.

The convenient embellishments of African poetry, and African battles, and all the hideous phantoms of imaginary woe, I leave to minds open to credulity. Such weak devices may influence those who are not well informed on the African Trade, who from habit and connexion may be prejudiced against it; or those who, from nature and education, yield instant admiration to the descriptive flights of a towering imagination. I shall confine myself to a plain statement of their embarkation, and a comparative estimate of the mortality of Blacks and Whites during the passage to the West Indies.

I believe I can state with the greatest accuracy and truth that the number of deaths in every hundred slaves transported by the "Liverpool merchants since the last regulation took place, has not reached the average of four one-half in every hundred. And Gentlemen will please to recollect that the mortality amongst the British regiments transported to the West Indies during the late war, exceeded ten and a half in the hundred.

8437 troops were embarked.

932 died in the passage."

It is not my design or desire to inflame the passions, by calling the attention of the House to the numerous arts made use of by speakers and writers on this subject. I shall not now notice how much they have attempted to injure the fair fame and honour of men of unblemished reputation, but endeavour to convince this House, how much this branch of commerce has been calumniated, and that the world at large have been imposed upon by statements equally replete with absurdity and fallacy.

It has been found out by experience, that the natives of Europe could not endure any labour under the intemperate heats of the West Indies. Frequent attempts have been made to cultivate estates with white labourers. In this experiment the French are said to have lost 12000 Whites in the year 1763. The Assembly of Jamaica offered great encouragement in the year 1749, to induce

white

white families to settle in that Island, but of the few that went, in ten years there were no remains.

Nothing, I believe is more certain, than that if labourers could be hired in the Colonies at the same rate they are engaged in the dearest county in England, the planter would, with the greatest pleasure, give freedom to all his Negroes, and gladly employ the white labourers.

But since Northern constitutions cannot support a state of labour under a vertical sun, the planter must have recourse to that expedient, and use that other sort of servant for the cultivation of his property, which Africa can supply him with, and which the laws of England have hitherto allowed him to obtain.

On the Good Treatment

And moderate employment of the Negroes in the West Indies, we have the testimonies of Lord Shuddham, Admiral Barrington, Admiral Arbuthnot, Admiral Edwards, Admiral Hotham, Commodore Gardner, Lord Macartney, Lord Rodney, Sir Ralph Payne, Sir John Dalling, Sir Archibald Campbell, and a long list of respectable characters, on the minutes of this House. The ample testimonies of such honourable witnesses, who have resided much in that quarter of the globe, some of them for a long continuance of time, are more than sufficient to counteract and confute the exaggerated accounts of opposite, and indeed of different classes of men---of men whose prospects in life seem to have been clouded by disappointment, or whose hopes are now perhaps depending on the event of the proposed Abolition: of men whose evidence may justly be suspected to be tinged with the obstinacy of prejudice, or by the persevering absurdity of enthusiastic fanaticism: or of men whose garrulity and ignorance have pressed forward with a pert intrepidity to our Committees, because they thought they had found the privilege and opportunity of indulging their long-winded spleen, without the restraint of oaths, and without danger of punishment from detection.

If we advert to the manner of conducting the criminal law in Jamaica, or any other part of the West Indies, and at the proportion of deaths inflicted by it; the comparison with England will be favourable to the West Indians.

"In the different parishes of Jamaica, the average of the capital convictions and executions of Slaves does not
" equal

“ equal that of England. From the 1st of January, 1784,
 “ to the 30th of September, 1788, the total appears to be
 “ fifty-two executions in four years and nine months,
 “ which is not more than eleven per annum, for the last
 “ five years, out of 210,849 Slaves. A proof of lenity
 “ in the exercise of the criminal laws, not to be surpassed
 “ by any nation in Europe.”

It cannot be deemed irregular, in this stage of my argument, to mention the amount of the property engaged in, and intimately connected with the African Trade.--- In stating a subject of such magnitude, I will strive as much as possible not to trespass on the patience of the House; at the same time I shall endeavour to give Gentlemen an idea of its importance, without detailing at length the numerous articles involved in so capital a branch of the Commerce of this country. I think I have stated with accuracy and brevity that the West India Islands could not be cultivated without the use of Negroes. If, therefore, so considerable a part of the dominion of this country could *not* be cultivated in any other manner, the natural inference is, that that part of the empire depends entirely on the continuation of the African Trade. No person in the least acquainted with all the branches of the West India concerns, can estimate the value of the property so engaged, at less than seventy millions sterling. If therefore this Commerce to Africa and the West Indies was stopped, this property of seventy millions belonging to the Planters and Merchants is not the only object in question. A yearly loss of six millions would arise to the manufacturer, ship-builder, and a long train of working people who would be thrown out of employ.

As a statement on paper elucidates a subject of this nature, better than any other mode, I beg leave to read a short extract of a calculation lately made at Liverpool, by a Merchant well conversant in the African Trade at that port:

“ The annual nett profits accruing from this trade are
 “ not less than 135,000l. which sum is shared pretty nearly
 “ in the following manner: captains’, mates’, and
 “ doctors’ emoluments, sailors’ wages, &c. amount to
 “ 50,000l. profits to ship-builders, and other artificers
 “ and tradesmen, 20,000l. the remaining 65,000l. is the
 “ net profit of the merchant adventurers. To these profits

" fits accruing from the African Trade the town of Liverpool principally attributes its flourishing state and " rapid increase."

The House will please to observe that the exports from Liverpool, consisting of the manufactures of Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, and other neighbouring towns, which amount to a very considerable sum annually, are not noticed, and other material circumstances, which I shall not touch upon at present.

With respect to the value of the West India islands, and the *accession of revenue derived by this Country* from that quarter of the globe: Gentlemen who have better opportunities of inspecting the public offices, and knowing the returns of the Custom-house, must be more fully informed than I can possibly pretend to be on this part of the subject. But I believe I take it at the lowest calculation when I state that the duties on West India commodities send annually one million, seven hundred and fifty thousand pounds into the Exchequer.

Besides the produce of other taxes which certainly bear on the West India gentlemen who reside in this country, in equal proportion with the other members of society; it must likewise be recollected that the West Indies draw all their utensils, apparel, and every other article of British manufactures from this country. In addition to these considerations, we may advert to the medium produce arising from our annual imports and exports, which amount to upwards of six millions, prime cost, in Great Britain. But after passing through the hands of the manufacturer, exceed 8,000,000*l.* sterling.

It has, I believe, been stated in former debates on this subject, that France and other countries were averse to the African trade, and well disposed to put a period to this branch of commerce. Any man that can discover the slightest intention in the part of other European governments, or the smallest expectation in the people that their Slave Trade would be abolished, his opinion must be either founded on private intelligence, or guided by some very extraordinary rule of reasoning; because I think the examples which I shall submit to the House, manifest a deliberate design in them all to extend it to the utmost of their knowledge and ability.

The

The *Portuguese* are the only nation in Europe who do not appear to have made any alterations or improvements in the mode of conducting the Slave Trade: they have neither visited new coasts, nor made any new settlements. Their annual import of Slaves into the *Brazils* is understood to be pretty regular, and particularly necessary for the working of the mines.

The *Danes* have lately increased their Commerce to the coast of Africa, and transport a large quantity of Negroes to their possessions in the West Indies.

Spain has lately made considerable arrangements for increasing her Slave Trade, and both her Court and merchants are endeavouring to make themselves acquainted with the best mode of carrying it on. In the year 1788, some Spanish merchants went to Manchester, to enquire the prices of goods, and to Liverpool, to examine the slave-ships, and to put questions as to the probability of any captains, or surgeons in the trade, being prevailed upon to settle at Cadiz.

The opinions and intentions of the *Dutch*, who have some claim to experience and wisdom in commercial affairs, are exemplified by a resolution of the States of Holland and West Friezland, (dated the 11th of May, 1788,) states, "That the existence of the Colonies, and the
" prosperity of the Planters, will always depend on the
" greater and less supply of Slaves. As the advantages
" deriving from them to the mother country will always
" be greater or less in proportion, if the Slave Trade be
" exclusively carried on by the subjects of the state: for
" that an admission of strangers to a participation of it,
" would not only be dangerous, but even destructive,---
" That those who supply the Planter with Slaves, will, if
" they choose, be paid in the production of the Colonies,
" in defiance of the severest penalties." The States
therefore object to the admission of foreign vessels, and
recommend, "That every means should be employed to
" promote a speedy enlargement of the Slave Trade, in
" proportion to the wants of the Planters, and that no
" trouble or expence should be spared till a sufficient
" number of slave-ships are fitted for this purpose."

The *French* have for a long time made annual presents to the *Moorish Kings*, under certain conditions: first, that their subjects shall not carry any of their gum to Pontodio:
and,

and, secondly, that they shall be ready *on all occasions to furnish Slaves.*

And ever since the year 1784, the French, notwithstanding the distracted situation of their finances, have paid a premium on the tonnage of their vessels which sail from France to Africa, and 230 livres a head for each Slave imported into St. Domingo, and 166 livres a head in the other islands. I have now a list in my hand of French vessels fitted out within the last twelve months for the Coast of Africa, from the port of Bourdeaux only.--- The number amounts to 52, and the burthen to 18,360 tons.

Since the last peace, the French have a considerable trade from Benin, Whidah, and Lago, (where they always had some), in the river Bonny, (where they formerly had none,) and have engrossed the *whole* trade on the coast of Angola. This is confirmed by the evidence of Capt. Donnett, of the Pomona, and Mr. Penny. Pro. C. Rept. Part I. Tit. Slaves.

It is therefore apparent, that if we were disposed to sacrifice our African Trade, that other nations would not enter into so ruinous a plan. The French, for instance, depend greatly on their West India Trade as a source both of Revenue and Navigation. Will they suffer a Trade upon which their *whole* Commerce turns, to languish for want of Slaves to cultivate their sugar plantations? No; they would thank us for our mistaken humanity, and they would profit by it. The disadvantage would be ours--- the advantage would be theirs. The condition of the African would be same, whether he crossed the Atlantic in a French or English bottom; and should we persist in so wild a project as Abolition, France will soon be supplied with English houses, English ships, and English capitals.

It will be highly unnecessary to consume the time of the House in proving at length how far the African Trade is advantageous to the Navy of Great Britain. It would be ridiculous and absurd in me to expatiate on this subject, which has been illustrated by the testimonies of such eminent professional characters, as Admiral Barrington, Admiral Arbuthnot, Admiral Edwards, Admiral Hotham, Admiral Rowley, Captain Lambert, Commodore Gardner, Sir Peter Parker, and Lord Rodney.

I shall,

I shall, however, beg leave to submit to the House some documents on that subject, which I have received from Liverpool.

"The Liverpool African Trade is in proportion to the number of hands it employs, the most productive nursery for seamen that belongs to the Commerce of this country. For, admitting for a moment the exaggerated calculations which have gone abroad of the mortality of the Seamen employed in this Trade; admitting that 642, out of 3170 persons die in the voyage of one year; admitting further, that half this mortality falls upon that half of the crew which is composed of seamen and officers, and consequently that 321 seamen perish in the course of one year's voyage, yet as 1585 landmen from the single port of Liverpool are annually converted into seamen by this Trade, it follows upon the most unfavourable calculations of the mortality of this Trade, that Liverpool alone, in spite of that fabricated mortality, contributes annually, by means of this trade, an augmentation of 943 persons to the navy of Great Britain."

Having received the indulgence of the House during many statements which perhaps had nothing of novelty in them, but were indispensibly requisite, and which I have endeavoured to render as concise as possible, I will not much longer trespass on its patience.

It cannot be deemed, I hope, superfluous, if I mention to the House some circumstances which I may have omitted, or which I have not sufficiently enforced to attract its attention. I could wish, Gentlemen, to advert to the value of the property and the connexions, which are as much dependent upon the African Trade, to use the language of an elegant author, "as a bird is on its wing for food, and when wounded there it starves."---I could wish to impress them strongly with the recollection of the sanction the African Trade has obtained from Government.---I could wish to remind them of the duration of time the question of Abolition has been pending in Parliament.---I could wish to give all the assistance in my power, which I acknowledge is very feeble, to accelerate that adjudication which has been so often, so earnestly, and so fervently implored by numerous merchants and manufacturers of this country, whose interest has been materially

materially injured by procrastination. And I trust I cannot make a futile appeal to this House, when I call upon its justice to extend a vote of protection to the West India Planters, whose lives have been, and are exposed to imminent and hourly danger, and whose fortunes have experienced a severe and unmerited depreciation, notwithstanding the existing laws of the country, from the inquisitorial powers vested by the Constitution in this Assembly.---To what are we to ascribe that depreciation? To what are we to impute the late insurrection at Dominica? Which island the Governor pledged himself not long since, to retain in proper subjection, without the assistance of the military.---But which was lately saved from horrid carnage and midnight butchery, by the adventitious presence of two British regiments. To what can we ascribe this insurrection? To nothing but the question of the Abolition. And after a tedious investigation of that question for four years, I cannot discover the slightest reason to justify delay, unless Gentlemen cannot prevail upon themselves to decide, till an insurrection has absolutely taken place at Jamaica; when the sorrow, I had almost said, the penitence of the mover and abettors of Abolition, and the interference of this House, will be equally unavailing.

To the Gentlemen of great landed property, it is unnecessary for me to point out the tendency and probable effect of the proposed Abolition. If I possessed all the ingenuity and eloquence now within these walls, I could not with those powerful auxiliaries, convince them that the Abolition would improve the Commerce of the Country---lessen the national debt---or take a fraction from the oppressive taxes they now endure. But I believe they will give me credit, unexperienced as I am, when I plainly advance, that it will have a contrary effect. When I assert, that the movers and abettors of it, endanger their happiness, their honour, and their property. And when I infer, that the Minister, not being taken by surprise on this subject, must naturally be supposed to have some capital resource in store, either from some novel calculation that the land tax will bear an additional burthen, or from some inexhaustible source of *unclaimed* wealth, which has hitherto escaped the vigilance of his predecessors in office or of the public, to compensate for such a diminution of

the trade, and consequent defalcation of the revenue of the Country.

To the mercantile part of the House I must hold language, which I am sorry to say, seems to correspond with the feelings of the mover and abettors of the Abolition. Gentlemen, your success in trade has been of late years so prodigious, that it seems necessary to suspend your activity, by cutting off one of the branches of your Commerce for the sake of humanity, and to preserve the reputation of the Country. --- You must have no respect for, or future confidence in acts of Parliament. The sanction of the Legislature is nothing! A part of the ministerial side of this House has lately been gifted with religious inspiration. --- The revelation has likewise been extended to some eminent personages on this side; and these enlightened philanthropists have discovered, that it is necessary for the honour of the nation, that all British subjects engaged in the African Trade, should have their designs harrassed, their property injured, and their reputation traduced; notwithstanding such persecution will undoubtedly foster, encourage and aggrandize our natural enemies, and all the surrounding nations of Europe, who rival Great Britain in her Commerce and her Navigation.

As the superstition and bigotry of the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries, which, during those dark, ignorant, and barbarous ages, threw down every barrier erected by reason, and by justice. In the name of God let not a mistaken humanity in these enlightened times furnish a colourable pretext for any injurious attack upon property and reputation.

If Gentlemen are sincerely interested about the condition of their fellow-creatures; if they feel the true sensations of philanthropy, and are not more anxious to display their eloquence than their charity; there are sufficient objects to excite their attention and employ their talents.

The *Poor's* laws of this country merit their revival, and the Poor demand their assistance, and protection. If they require a wider scope for their benevolent actions, the last account of the dreadful condition of our settlement in New South Wales, commonly called Botany Bay, affords ample subject for commiseration, and requires the immediate interposition of Government.

In

• In thus pointing out to the House, the objects for attention and commiseration, I would not have it understood that I could wish to *confine* the operations of humanity. The sensations derived from so benign a source will, I hope, whilst man remains on the face of the earth, reach every recess of the human heart, and pervade every region in the universe. All I meant was a judicious discrimination in the exercise of that godlike virtue. A feeling mind contemplative of the misfortunes of its fellow-creatures, will find full employment for its beneficence in the wide circle of human calamity, without making a violent, ill-judged, and sanatic attack upon the reputation and property of thousands of the first merchants, manufacturers, and planters, belonging to this country, who have engaged in an extensive trade under the immediate sanction of the British Parliament.

If all the authorities which I have adduced were doubtful; if the foregoing premises were fallacious; if some of the circumstances of cruelty were proved, which the abettors of the Abolition have only asserted, and which, fortunately for this country, and happily for human nature, are unfounded, I should think myself guilty of a rash and impolitic measure in voting for the Abolition, if I only took a cursory glance at the present state of the finances of England, and her relative situation with Europe. I cannot bring myself to think this a convenient time, the country in an eligible situation, or the Minister serious in his inclination to make an experiment which presents a certain prospect of loss, and no probability of advantage. An Abolition would instantly annihilate a Trade that annually employs upwards of 5500 sailors, upwards of 160 ships, and exports which amount to 700,000l. sterling. And the *same experiment* would undoubtedly bring the West India Trade to decay; the annual exports and imports of which considerably exceed 6,000,000l. sterling, with the employment of 162,000 tonnage of additional shipping, and sailors in proportion; all objects too considerable to be even hazarded upon an unnecessary speculation, which in all human probability, would prove ruinous to the commercial consequence, to the national honour, and to the political glory of Great Britain.

Mr,

Mr. Grosvenor spoke against the abolition; of twenty reasons that might be urged against it, the first, he said, might be deemed sufficient, viz. that it was impossible. The principle of the Trade did not exist in this country, but in Africa, and over that which had its origin and foundation in Africa an Act of Parliament had no controul. It originated in the savage manners of the natives of Africa, their propensity to make war on one another, and their martial law which condemned prisoners of war to slavery or death. An Act of Parliament could not humanize a continent, or change customs which had been established for ages. Were the Trade to be abandoned by this country, it would be eagerly seized by the traders of other countries, who would be happy to avail themselves of the advantages to navigation and commerce, which we had thrown away.

Mr. James Martin said, "Whoever has lived to any advanced age, must be well aware to what a considerable degree a mistaken self-interest can darken the understanding, and pervert the judgment, even of the best meaning persons. I have often, Sir, with much concern, observed, how very perniciously this bias operates to the detriment of society, and to the disgrace of mankind; but I was not apprised of the full power of this delusion of the mind, till the business now before the House began to be the subject of public discussion. I had always conceived, Sir, that the custom of trafficking in human creatures had been incautiously begun, without its direful and necessary consequence being foreseen;---for I never could persuade myself that any man under the influence of moral principles, could suffer himself knowingly to be carrying on a trade replete with fraud, cruelty, and destruction---Sir, I say, destruction, for so I think, and think the destruction introduced and occasioned by this most shocking trade is of the blackest and most inhuman species; insomuch as it is a lingering death, which, instead of putting an end to the misery of the sufferers by a speedy stroke, not only afflicts and tortures the body, but, by depriving the wretch of all the dearest comforts of life, harasses the mind, till nature, sinking under grief and despair, kindly grants that relief which the tyrant master, for the sake of his own private, but much mistaken, self-interest, would deny. But, Sir, it is clear to every person of accurate observation

observation, that those who blindly and immediately listen to the suggestions of a narrow self-interest, do really thwart and counteract that interest to which they are ready to sacrifice every just, noble, and public principle. Sir, it is well observed, in the excellent Petition from the University of Cambridge to this House, against the Slave Trade, that "a firm belief in the providence of a benevolent Creator, assures them that no system founded on the oppression of one part of mankind, can be beneficial to another." I feel, Mr. Speaker, much real concern and mortification, that in an Assembly of the Representatives of a Country, boasting itself zealous, not only for its own liberties, but for the general rights of mankind, it should be necessary to say a single word on such a subject; but, from the sentiments I have heard in various conversations, very much to my surprise, it appears, that however strongly the sense of truth and justice is impressed on the minds of unprejudiced persons, the deceitfulness of the human heart is such as to change the appearances of truth when it stands in opposition to self-interest, as self-interest is often unfortunately misunderstood.

Sir, I verily believe, that there is hardly any thing so execrably unjust and cruel that men, who are thoroughly selfish and avaricious, will not bring themselves to believe to be right and defensible, and will not consequently adduce specious and sophistical arguments to support; but trust, that every honest man will treat such arguments with the contempt and indignation which they deserve, and that England, as a wise and virtuous people should, will hold fast and cling to the eternal and universal principles of truth, justice, and humanity.

Sir, I have lately heard doctrines maintained, which seem to have been reserved for times the most flagrantly profligate and abandoned; but I trust that such doctrines will not be received, or even be offered in this assembly. Sir, I never expected to hear that the everlasting laws of righteousness are to give way to imaginary political and commercial expedience, and that millions of our fellow-creatures, very many scores of thousands annually are to be reduced to the most wretched of all states, that individuals may enjoy a greater degree of opulence, or that the State may collect somewhat more for its revenue.---

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These

These considerations, Sir, compared with the sacred and eternal rules of justice and mercy, are so trifling, that I trust they will have no weight whatever, when opposed to them; and I cannot but be very sanguine in my hopes of success to the measure proposed by the worthy mover, when I consider, that from the goodness of his cause, he must necessarily have the countenance and support of the most respectable bodies of men, as well as of private individuals of almost every description, as I shall now endeavour to shew.

However, Mr. Speaker, we may have differed in party opinions concerning certain high and distinguished characters, I believe all will allow the first persons of Royal dignity in this country to be of merciful and benovolent dispositions, and that they have inspired those descended from them with the same sentiments of humanity and generosity. This being so, Sir, we may justly entertain the warmest hopes of the countenance and support of every part of the Royal Family. Both Houses of Parliament are now engaged in the prosecution of a gentleman accused of cruelty and oppression in a high degree. Sir, I fear that some of the charges brought against that gentleman may be too well founded; but so far as appears to me in regard to the exercise of any cruelties brought home to him, they are neither to be compared in number or degree to those which are every day, and every hour, committed in the abominable traffic, the abolition of which is the object now before us. Sir, of the Reverend Bench of Bishops, who are, by their doctrine and example, to render christianity amiable, and to recommend it to the world, I must not be permitted to doubt on this occasion; and some of the inferior clergy have already manifested an honest zeal in this most righteous cause.--- The University of Cambridge has presented a petition to this House, worthy the attention of every well-wisher to humanity; and the sister University has, by the mouth of one of her respectable representatives, given sanction to the measure. Dissenters, Sir, of various denominations, and particularly the Quakers, who, upon this occasion, to their immortal honour, have taken a leading part: but I say, Sir, different bodies of Dissenters vie with some of the most respectable of the established church, in standing forth in this excellent cause. Sir, we have for many years,

and,

and, God knows, with too much reason, been hearing violent accusations of delinquents from India---Surely, Sir, the accusers of such delinquents will be eager upon this occasion, to shew that they have been actuated by the pure principles of humanity, without party spirit or other unworthy motives; particularly, Sir, I shall much confide in those Gentlemen, who, as Managers of the prosecution against Mr. Hastings, have exhibited such astonishing eloquence, as, perhaps, was never excelled, or even equalled. The same powers of eloquence exerted in a cause at least as worthy, must bear down any obstacle of resistance, and defeat every opposition that narrow and mistaken self-interest can raise against the measure.

Sir, some of the greatest trading towns in this country have declared for the Abolition, in which they have been joined by many of the first counties in weight and consequence, particularly by that county of which the Honourable Mover is one of the Representatives. Sir, the county of York has always been, and I trust ever will be, forward to take the lead in every public measure in which the general rights of mankind are interested. Sir, I am persuaded that the wishes of that distinguished county upon this, as upon every occasion, will be powerfully supported by its two excellent Representatives. With so much good support, and so good a cause, Sir, it must be impossible to fail. Let but every man stand forth, who has, at any time in his life, boasted, as an Englishman, of a superior regard to the general rights of nature and of mankind, and who has affected at least to despise other nations as being defective in such regard--and we shall most assuredly succeed; but if it were otherwise, we must have a most shameless effrontery, if we should ever after pretend to the character of real Christians, or Britons, or indeed of men of such general moral principles as should govern every human being, of whatever country or religion.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, as Englishmen, and especially as the Representatives of a people priding themselves in, and perpetually boasting of, liberal sentiments towards all mankind, we should be particularly cautious, and even extremely anxious, to avoid the smallest appearance of any unjust and tyrannical principle: But how distinguishing-
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ly hypocritical shall we appear, if, instead of defending the rights of the oppressed, we shall be the leaders in oppression and cruelty, or at least wait for the example of those whom we accuse of being tyrannical, before we check and stop the arm of tyranny, which has been too long violently wielded over our fellow-creatures.

We, Sir, who are tenacious to excess, if it be possible, of our rights, and manifest the hottest indignation even at the smallest personal insult, (particularly if it be offered by the hand of government.) We, Sir, who have punished tyrants of the highest rank in this country---are we to suffer innocent creatures to be whipped and scourged, and tortured without discretion, without controul, without trial, and without law?

In short, Sir, if we have any regard to national reputation, let us not add the most shameful and abominable hypocrisy to guilt and infamy, by exercising tyranny of the blackest kind, and affecting, at the same time, the keenest indignation at every exertion of power amongst ourselves, that is not strictly and perfectly legal.

Sir, I am so far from condemning the jealousy of illegal power amongst ourselves, that it has my highest applause---but I would wish that the same laudable principle should be exerted in its fullest extent towards the rest of mankind.

Sir, we can hardly bear the sight of any thing resembling slavery, even as a punishment, among ourselves, and shall we countenance the exercise of the most despotic power over millions of creatures, who, for ought we know, are not only innocent but meritorious?

Sir, it has been frequently, but most disgracefully, said, by the advocates for the continuance, or at least by these who are not very zealous for the abolition of this commerce, that we Englishmen should not be too eager in setting the example; but that we should wait for the French, or other foreigners, to take the lead in this business: How far such a sentiment is consistent with the ancient, noble, and generous character of this nation, and with the high opinion we are apt to entertain of our national honour at this time, I will leave to the judgment of every impartial person; but I should have flattered myself, that we should rather have been eager to be first in so good a cause, and that we should rather have been fear-
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ful of being anticipated by those whose principles, in regard to the rights of mankind, we have not been accustomed to hold in very high respect. If any nation is to be foremost in such a matter, which is most bound to take the lead, such as pretend, and proudly too, to a vast superiority over the rest of mankind in their civil rights, or such as we have always affected to despise for abject submission and the meanest servility?

If, Sir, we should set this good example, and not be followed by other European nations, let the guilt and infamy of such a system lay heavy on those, who, in that case would continue to act upon it, in spite of example, added to the dictates both of reason and religion.

Surely, Mr. Speaker, this motion comes recommended to us in the strongest manner. The Hon. and worthy Gentleman who introduces it, is justly esteemed for the respectability of his character: He is, Sir, one of the representatives of a county, which, as I have said before, (but which for its honour cannot be mentioned too often) has always manifested a readiness to take the lead in every public measure for the good of the community, or for the general benefit of mankind. If, Sir, this business had been in hands less able and less respectable, I should *now* particularly have much regretted the loss of one of the Hon. Gentleman's predecessors in the representation of Yorkshire, who I am sure upon this occasion would have eagerly displayed that ardent zeal for the unalienable rights of *all* his fellow-creatures; which was one of the chief characteristics of that most excellent citizen; but, Sir, I am persuaded, that as the present representatives of the county of York have been worthy followers of that bright example, so, on this most interesting occasion, they will burn with the same ardent zeal for relieving the distressed which animated the breast of that most incomparable man. Would to God, Sir, that every member of the British Parliament would look up with reverence to that illustrious pattern! Let us follow his footsteps in the purity of our conduct, in our love of justice, mercy, and truth, and in the universal rectitude of all our measures---if we do this, Sir, we shall pay the same tender regard to the rights of other countries as to our own; and, for my part, I shall never believe those persons really sincere, who are loud in their professions of love of liberty, if I see that

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love confined to the narrow circle of one community, which ought to be extended to the natural rights of every human inhabitant of the globe. We shall be more able, Sir, to bring ourselves up to this standard of rectitude, if we heartily endeavour to imagine ourselves in the situation of those who are oppressed, and then seriously consider what we should think of such as could wish to establish a just and equitable system of morality in regard to themselves, and one of another kind towards those whom, for certain reasons, they may erroneously think it their interest to oppress. But, Mr. Speaker, let us not deceive ourselves so grossly, as to imagine, that it is our real interest to oppress any one; the advantages to be obtained by oppression and tyranny, are imaginary and deceitful to the oppressor and the tyrant---and the evils they cause to the oppressed, are heavy, grievous, and many times insupportable.---Before I sit down, Sir, I would beg leave to observe, that if, in delivering those sentiments which I have presumed to offer to the House, I should appear to have expressed myself in any way too strongly, or with too much vehemence, I freely trust to the candour and fairness of Gentlemen for giving me the credit of not wishing or meaning to say any thing violent or offensive; but, Sir, I must declare, that I should think most contemptibly of myself, could I mention the enormities of the Slave Trade, without a very considerable degree of emotion and resentment; nevertheless, I would wish it were perfectly understood, that this resentment goes only to the principles and consequences of the Trade itself, without any ill will towards the persons concerned in it. Many of those persons, Sir, from peculiar situations, and from circumstances, perhaps almost unavoidable, may be involved in it, and probably much to their concern and discontent. Such persons, Sir, I doubt not, from use and habit, see it in a very different light, however, from others. If, Sir, a person being betrayed by his feelings into an unbecoming degree of heat, in such matters as relate solely to his own selfish interests, is pardoned for such offence, he surely has a juster claim to liberal allowance, whose feelings are excited by the wrongs of others, with whom he has only that general connection, which, however, ought strongly to be felt by every human creature. I, Sir, personally, can feel no grievance whatever from the

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continuance of the Slave Trade ; and I therefore trust, that there will be a disposition to excuse any excess that can have been occasioned only by that pity which I feel for others. I am aware, Sir, but of one unworthy motive to which my conduct, as well as that of many other individuals, upon this occasion, may be attributed---I mean, Sir, the ostentation and parade of virtuous and worthy sentiments.

Now, Sir, I must beg leave to remark, that it appears to me there is no one good action which can be performed in life that may not be attributed, by suspicion or malevolence, to that particular motive. Men may always insinuate, that vain-glory is the cause by which individuals are incited to actions apparently good ; but that matter must be decided between God and the consciences of those persons whose conduct is suspected, or perhaps maliciously accused even without suspicion ; and if the general tenor of a man's life does not fairly lead to suspicion that he is hypocritical or ostentatious, it is surely highly uncharitable to impute to him such disposition without sufficient grounds, and it is moreover of most pernicious consequence to the public, as a great discouragement to men from acting meritoriously, when they not only lose the credit of so acting, but are accused of doing that which is right in itself, merely for the sake of public and popular applause. If, Sir, notwithstanding this remark, I should be so unhappy as to draw upon myself, by the part I have taken in this business, that harsh and undeserved censure which I wish to deprecate, I must endeavour to satisfy myself with the consciousness of my own fair intentions, and my most sincere unwillingness to give offence to any one---and with declaring, that as I do not pretend to judge of the feelings of other men's minds, so I must protest, that seeing this matter in the light I do, I should esteem myself one of the worst of men, did I not exert every means in my power perfectly to abolish such abominable wickedness. If, in attempting to forward this abolition, I shew the weakness of my ability, I must console myself with the consideration, that I feel more solid comfort from sound public principle and consistent conduct therein, than I imagined I should do from the exertion of any of the most brilliant faculties with which I might have been blessed. I have only to conclude, Sir, with

with giving my hearty assent in the most public manner, to the motion before us, and with imploring the blessing of Heaven on our honest and earnest endeavours for the attainment of its perfect and complete success ;---but, Sir, I must add my tribute of sincere thanks to the Hon. Gentleman who has made the motion of this day, and to those Honourable Gentlemen who have particularly assisted him in the prosecution of this business. Sir, I am very certain that they deserve the thanks of this House and the public, and that when this matter shall be thoroughly understood, they will receive those thanks in the fullest and sincerest manner."

Mr. Burdon thought a gradual would be preferable to an immediate abolition. It would give time to the proprietors of Slaves to take measures for keeping up their stock without importation ; and would prevent a monopoly being formed by the rich planters, to the prejudice of the less affluent, which an immediate abolition would have a tendency to produce. If therefore the proposition could be so modified as to effect a gradual abolition, he should be inclined to support it.

Mr. Francis said, the Hon. Gentleman who moved the Resolution, had drawn inferences from facts, and proofs from inferences, in such a manner as if it did not produce conviction, he had no idea of conviction being produced from evidence and argument. No man had yet ventured to say that the trade was not criminal ; and there was much reason to doubt whether, on the whole, it was profitable. If his judgment were to be biassed by motives of interest or connection, every one of those motives would incline him to vote against the Resolution ; but he had not yet learned to make a compromise between duty and interest ; and were he to do so on the present occasion, he should derive little comfort from his feelings during the rest of his life. Without considering the situation of the Slaves in Africa, the manner in which they were made Slaves, or the horrors of their transportation, and looking merely to their situation in the islands, their state was such as ought not to be tolerated by the legislature of a civilized country. The power of punishment alone was sufficient to decide this. Where was that lodged, how was it awarded, and by whom was it inflicted ? The party offended was the Judge, he pronounced sen-

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tence between himself and the defenceless Slave, and he too was the executioner. He inflicted the punishment with his own hand, and every stripe he gave served only to aggravate his passion, so that punishment became in him the gratification of malignant brutality and revenge. The man who did this was seldom the proprietor, whose hand might be restrained by motives of interest, but an overseer who had no personal interest in the life of the unhappy sufferers, and whose disposition was daily rendered more barbarous and unfeeling by the practice of inflicting punishment to stimulate exertion.

Nothing had a stronger tendency to corrupt the mind of man than the power of inflicting punishment. The effect which this produced might be seen at home in the treatment of horses, those noble animals, reared with such care, and so highly valued. At all public places where they were not able to perform impossibilities, the coachman, when once he began to apply his whip, seldom desisted, but from its failing, or a sense of danger to himself. Yet horses were property highly prized, and carefully protected, which shewed that no consideration of property was an adequate defence to the object of it against the abuse of unlimited power. The proprietors of Slaves would be much more careful to treat them with humanity, to grant them every degree of indulgence and protection, which their condition would admit, in order to encourage propagation, and keep up their stock, when they were cut off from all other means of supply. To this they had hitherto paid very little attention, for it was thought cheaper, and more convenient, to keep up the stock on a plantation, by importing Slaves, than by rearing children. To have prolific women, was thought rather an inconvenience than an advantage. The mother of a child, when her month was up, was sent to labour with her infant at her back, and when seated on the ground to give it the breast, was frequently roused by a lash of the cart whip.

He should have a much better opinion of the laws for protecting the lives of Slaves could he find that they were executed with such rigour as to give them effect. There was an instance in evidence, and he regretted that the Hon. Gentleman had not stated more, because they made a more forcible impression on men's minds than arguments,

ments, of an overseer having thrown a slave into boiling cane-juice, which caused his death within four days.--- What was his punishment? He was dismissed from his employment, and condemned to pay the price of the slave. A case had occurred since the present enquiry was set on foot, not less atrocious. A girl of fourteen was so cruelly mangled with the cart-whip, that she was unable to stand; and in this condition she was dragged along the ground to what is called the Hospital, where she died. The perpetrator of this murder was tried, and acquitted by a jury, on the ground that as the girl was property, it could not be his intention to kill her. Was it uncharitable to presume, that the men who gave such a verdict, would be capable, under the influence of passion, of committing such an act as they thought fit to justify? Was it not reasonable to presume, that there was something in slavery, which debased equally the mind of the master and the slave?

Sir William Young said, he rejoiced that he had had an opportunity to consider maturely, the very brilliant speech and elegant arguments of the Hon. Gentleman who made the motion before the Committee. There had been a vast body of evidence brought forward by those who wished to abolish the trade, which, though it might be in some respects true, was, in others, if not false, greatly exaggerated; and he must say, that those gentlemen had carefully left out every part of the evidence which did not support their own proposition, and all that militated against it, for which reason he hoped the Committee would not be led away by their statement, however eloquently it might be brought before them. He contended that the trade was absolutely necessary to the existence of our property in the West India islands, and was sure that were we to abolish it, other nations would take the advantage of our imprudence, and take it up with avidity, as they had often declared the necessity of encouraging the importation of Slaves into their own islands.

An Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Wilberforce) speaking on this subject in the year 1789, had said, that a neighbouring people who were then recovering their liberty had, in the first transports of their joy, and wishing to transfuse the same blessings to others they were about to enjoy themselves, proposed to abolish the African trade; but mark what has since happened---When M. Barnave brought
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down the report of the Committee on this subject, the National Assembly would not hear a word advanced in favour of the Abolition; nor has the subject ever since been attempted to be brought forward. The Hon. Baronet produced likewise two other instances which strongly proved that we should find many competitors for this traffic, were we to abolish it. The Cabinet of Spain was so well convinced of the advantage to be derived from it in support of their West India Colonies, that the King had issued an edict in 1789, revoking all the former ones, and ordering ports to be opened in his trans-atlantic dominions for the importation of Slaves: he also offered a bounty of one dollar upon every Slave, as an encouragement for their importation. The Phillipine Company, at the same time, established a factory in Africa to procure Slaves. The Danes and the Dutch were not less eager to have their share of the trade, particularly the latter, who had come to some very strong resolutions for the recovery of it. These were sufficient instances to show, that when we abandoned it, other nations would take it up.

He took notice of what had been said by a Right Honourable Gentleman (Mr. Fox) on a former occasion, for whom, though he had not the honour to be much acquainted, he must confess how sensible he was of his abilities and character as a statesman, and how much weight and consequence naturally followed his arguments in that House and in the country; that Right Hon. Gentleman had said, that after considering seriously the whole evidence that had been laid before the Committee on the Slave Trade, if there was a man who thought that it ought not to be abolished, he must indeed have a hard heart, and an inaccessible head. He hoped, however, that he would not be accused of a hard heart, though he differed from the Right Hon. Gentleman, when no evidence that had been given convinced him of the propriety of that measure; as to the use made to that evidence, and the arguments upon it, they really were not within his comprehension. That Statesmen, and others, had gone farther, and said, that they saw nothing but inhumanity and injustice in the African Trade, and therefore cry---abolish it immediately, for no advantage to this country, or safety to your Islands and Colonies, can excuse inhumanity.---- In his mind, serious and dreadful would these consequences be,

be, and he considered all Statesmen, and other men, responsible, not only for their actions, but the consequences of their actions. It had been remarked by several Gentlemen, that the whole of that evidence which went directly to prove the propriety of African Slavery, nay, even the justice of it, had been carefully passed over by the Hon. Gentlemen, who contended for the Abolition; he thought it therefore necessary to advert to some of the most particular witnesses, and to repeat their various testimonies to the House, as argumentative documents in support of his observations against the question.

Here the Hon. Gentleman commented very minutely upon the evidence concerning the purchase, carriage, and treatment of the Slaves, and made many observations on the population, which he could even argue, from the arguments of the Honourable Mover, had increased of late under the management now prevalent in these Islands, without any necessity existing for abolishing so advantageous and important a branch of our revenue and commerce. From the evidence he remarked, that the conduct of the Slave Merchants was proper, and the principles upon which the trade was founded, not only justifiable, but politic and honourable. He acknowledged the veracity of the evidence; that the Chiefs did, in certain circumstances, go up the country and bring down from thence slaves in abundance to the British vessels. But he remarked, that the delinquency of some kind in the slave, was the constant cause of this violent measure; and even the very Kings and Princes of Africa, much less the British Merchants, could not be charged with cruelty for the act.

When he mentioned delinquency, he did not wish it should be deemed that kind of ill which we might consider as criminality. For we could be no more judges of right and wrong among Africans, than Africans could be among Britons; and here he wished it might be known, that however lightly we might think, or however jocosely we might treat either the old fashionable vice of witchcraft, or the more modern excess of adultery; still if the Africans, more moral than we, held them in detestation, whether they could term the one a crime where polygamy was permitted, or the other an offence, where only circumstances could establish it; still, in either case, they had as good a right to punish the offender as a British

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Jury would have to find a person guilty upon the most positive evidence; therefore the futility of the argument, that imaginary crimes were persecuted for the purpose of obtaining real ones, was completely defeated, and he expected, would no more be advanced in this debate. It had been rather severely stated, that much cruelty had been used, and innumerable acts of barbarism perpetrated to send into slavery the wretched African. But as mere surmise produced these suggestions, and as these suggestions were much exaggerated by the warm fancy, and more again by the heated imagination of enthusiastic phrenzy, he had some confidence that the House, by its determination that night, would let mankind know, that a British senate was not to be imposed upon by the fanatical reveries of hot sectaries and religious zealots.

The evidence given by Capt. Wilson and others, was held out, *in terrorem*, to frighten the feelings of the susceptible, and to misguide the judgment of the discerning. But he could not pass over their testimonies, without remarking, that the locality of their situation at Senegal, and particularly their ignorance of transactions not immediately within their view, when they gave hear-say evidence, were circumstances evidently sufficient to remove from the understanding of Gentlemen, not the fallacy, but the weakness of their testimonies; not but that he considered himself particularly bound to pay these Gentlemen every compliment due to the man of honour and of feeling; for he considered them as having acted upon principles of the highest honour and sentiment. But he would call the attention of Gentlemen to the evidence given in by Capt. Hall, who, in like manner, acted from the same principles; yet his statement went completely to a different effect, and went to deny that any unfair methods were adopted to obtain Slaves, or having obtained them, those cruelties practised, which had been so extravagantly reported; and this Gentleman had many opportunities of being universally acquainted with the country, which he stated from his own observations, and from being engaged many years in the trade himself. He gave as much information to the Committee, if not more, than any Gentleman whatsoever; yet his relation of facts went not to state a train of events which could either furnish

fact or argument for the Abolition of the trade ; but, on the contrary, promote it, and eventually promote the prosperity of the British Colonies in the West Indies.--- He was ready to admit that in the traffic for Africans, some indirect, nay, some wicked means had been used, but was that an argument against the propriety thereof ; many a person had been plundered in London streets--- was that a reason every person should stay within doors ? If the abolition took place, he insisted that it would be of no avail to the negroes, though the friends to it seemed inclined to make the negroes more than men, and the West India Gentlemen worse than negroes in their condition.

Sir William knew that the treatment which the slaves met with in the West Indies at present, was the best adapted to their real welfare and situation, as well as to the interests of the mother-country and her colonies ; and as to regulations, if any were necessary, he was sure the planters would themselves be best able and most willing to bring forward such propositions as might answer all the wishes of those humane Gentlemen, without any bad consequence resulting from them, and it would certainly be better to wait for such propositions, than to bring in any bill to abolish the Slave Trade so rashly, as he thought the motion, which, he hoped would not pass, tended to introduce.

Mr. M. Montagu rose to give the most unqualified approbation and support to the motion made by his Hon. Friend, and pledged himself, if this motion should be rejected, to renew it at some future time, declaring, while he had breath and power to use whatever talents or abilities fell to his lot, he should exert himself to the utmost, to obtain an object so desirable to every lover of justice and friend to mankind.

Lord John Russell said, he had very great respect for those Gentlemen, amongst whom were some of his particular friends, who had shewn so much humanity to the Slaves in the discussion of a question which had been argued with the most brilliant abilities that the House could boast of ; however, he could not agree to the motion in its present extent, because it tended to destroy a very considerable branch of commerce, our trade to the West Indies, and to injure a very respectable body of men concerned

cerned in that trade, under the sanction and faith of Parliament, without offering them any compensation for the injury done; and this he might argue to be the case, without saying any thing that could be called repugnant to the feelings of humanity or justice; nor did he think that either liberty or humanity were endangered by this trade. He believed that other nations certainly would enjoy the advantages of the trade were we to give it up, and that the Slaves would be in no better situation than they were now. He was likewise confident that many serious and alarming consequences would follow a precipitate abolition of the trade, which ought not to be risked for a measure which was only vague, speculative, visionary, and chimerical, which could answer no one specific purpose. Regulations might be necessary, and nobody would object to them, because they were sure that the ends proposed might be effected, the dignity of the country asserted, and all those cruelties and enormities so pathetically described, prevented, without a rash and total abolition of the trade. From what he had said, he hoped in God no man would censure him as possessed of a hard unfeeling heart, or insensible to every impression of humanity and mercy; he was sure if they did, they were mistaken in his character.

Mr. Stanley spoke strongly, and at very great length, against the abolition of the Slave Trade, as oppressive and unjust upon a great body of planters and merchants, injuring them without any prospect of recompence, and from ideas of humanity to the Negroes, which were ill-founded. Thirty years experience of the situation, and that of the planters and others connected with the trade, gave him some right to believe that he knew the true state of the case as well as most people. Of the evidence, some parts were true, some he knew to be fallacious, and others much exaggerated. He hoped, therefore, Gentlemen would not lay such implicit stress upon it, as friends to the abolition wished them to do. Many respectable names had been introduced, and their opinions quoted as authorities; amongst others, he would mention Admiral Barrington's, which avowed the necessity for discipline among the Negroes, such as was practised by the best and wisest planters, else it would be impossible to keep them in any kind of subjection or order. He might be answered, that naval men were accustomed to see harsh treatment,

ment, and lashing of men, therefore little disconcerted by it; but would this be a fair or liberal way of treating such authority as he had mentioned. He likewise read, as an authority, that Slavery was not incompatible with Christianity and religion---opinions of the Bishop of Gloucester---and stated, that if Slavery was abolished, the negroes would suppose themselves on a footing with their masters, and then an end would be put to all order, management and safety. If it was carried into execution, he thought we might as well give up our colonies and islands entirely at the same moment. The insurrections in Dominica, he was well informed, had originated from the discussion of this question in England, which was sent from France to the Slaves in Martinique, and from thence communicated to those of Dominica.

It was certainly the interest of the Planters to increase the population of negroes, and if humanity did not dictate to them to treat them properly, their interest would: for it was well known, that one of those who were called seasoned negroes were worth at least two African Slaves, many of whom died before they were seasoned. He knew a great many Planters, and believed in general that they all treated their Slaves very properly.

With regard to the horrid instances of miserable wretches being seen in the situations described by some of the evidences, from the cruelties of masters, these instances, he imagined, had been collected by those who were not much acquainted with the country, and had only been in towns, where they might have seen perhaps examples of the enormities committed by some monstrous rascals who had been their masters, but these were neither frequent nor common. He wished some salutary regulations could be thought of, and if any one brought them forward, the Planters would give him every support and assistance in their power, but he never could agree to a total abolition. He then described the situation of Antigua, Nevis, and St. Christopher's, with much local exactness and information; arguing still the necessity of slavery in these Islands, and supporting his position with extracts from Locke, and once or twice from the Scriptures. He spoke a long time, but in a low voice, and we neither could follow or collect what he said more particularly.

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Mr. Smith said, that he trusted that the House would not be led by texts to embrace a doctrine contrary to every system of religion. The great maxim of christianity was to do to others as we would be done by, and he would leave the House to judge, whether this was the principle of the Slave Trade. In justification of the practice had been alledged, its antiquity and universality; upon the same ground, every species of vice and folly might be defended. Slavery was upon a very different footing in former ages from what it is now; they were treated as part of the family, and removed from every degree of contumely. He would leave it to be determined, whether such was at present the condition of Slaves. It had been urged by the other side, that their cause was attended with considerable disadvantages. Their cause was indeed attended with considerable disadvantages, since, in defending it, they must oppose every common principle in which they had been educated, or which they had been taught to regard with reverence. The cause which he supported had likewise its disadvantages. It was necessary to oppose a body of men of great commercial importance, and of respectable private characters. And he was convinced that the hardships which the slaves suffered, arose chiefly from the want of their inspection. The abolition of the Slave Trade, he remarked, had purposely been confounded with the emancipation of the Negroes. For, from what principle could such a report have been propagated, except in order to excite prejudices against the cause. An insurrection, indeed, had happened. But such insurrections had happened before; and in three years, during which this business had been under consideration, might not one insurrection be accounted for upon common principles, and without supposing any particular influence? The fact was, that this insurrection was principally owing to some French Negroes, who had come among the slaves of our settlement, and happily had been quelled without any mischief.

The exports and imports of our West Indian Trade had been erroneously stated, in order to give a false importance to its advantages. The tonnage of the vessels had been said to amount to 240,000, and the sailors employed to 21,000. Whereas, in fact, in 1789, the whole tonnage amounted only to 130,000, and the sailors to 10,000.

10,000. The West India trade was confessedly of great importance to the country, and did not, in order to have its advantages magnified, stand in need either of careless or wilful exaggeration. Mr. King had stated, that the London Merchants exported to Africa to the value of 100,000*l.* but had neglected to add, that this sum included likewise the value of the ships which were employed in carrying on the trade. It would be seen what regard was due to evidence, accompanied with such gross misrepresentation. It had been stated, that our East India trade was interested in our connections with the coast of Africa. He could not see how this was the case, except that we were supplied from the East Indies with salt-petre for the gunpowder which we exported to Africa. It had been stated that we sent to Africa one-half of all the gunpowder which we exported, so that it seemed, of 2,700,000 *lb.* of gunpowder, the amount of our exportation in this article, we sent to Africa 1,300,000 *lb.* for the purposes, no doubt, of peace and civilization. An Hon. Gentleman had said, that he should not attempt to make any appeal to the feelings of the House, but should call the matter to reason and account. Yet surely if there was any question in which an appeal might with propriety be made to the feelings of the House, it was this. Yet he should adopt his method; he should call the matter to the decision of reason against prejudice, to account against groundless alarm and apprehension. He should demand nothing more than what was strictly justice, than what was consistent with the soundest policy. For he was convinced, that by the strictest observation of justice, the interest of no country could possibly be injured. By this question, it had been said, that we attempted to injure the honour and fair fame of respectable traders. Talk of honour and fair fame in a trade, whose first principle is founded in injustice, and which is carried on by a system of fraud and cruelty! Yet we were told that the Africans were deceitful and treacherous! Shame upon us! Deceitful and treacherous with such examples! The incredibility of the evidence on this side, arose from its atrocity. It seemed of a nature so shocking, as in order to enforce belief, required judicial information.

On this account he wished that the evidence taken before the Committee had been given upon oath. It would
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both have given the confirmation which was desirable to the facts on their side of the question, and another good effect it might have had to have rendered those on the other side more cautious with regard to the evidence which they had given. Capt. Knox had stated, that in a vessel of 147 tons, he carried upwards of 600 persons, who all had room to lay with comfort, when it appeared, from the evidence of one of his coadjutors, that 400 persons could not have room to lie in such a vessel. The same Gentleman had stated, that in a vessel of 120 tons, where he carried 130 tons water, he had no less than 500 persons, and provision and accommodation for them all. On such facts it was not necessary to make any remarks. We were told, that by the abolition of the African Trade, four or five thousand persons, who were employed in making guns for exportation to that country, would be deprived of a livelihood, as the trade was so entirely different from every other. The trade must indeed be allowed to be entirely different from every other, since the guns, which were so exported, were much more dangerous to the persons who used them, than to those against whom they were employed. The Muster Rolls of Liverpool prove, that of ten thousand persons employed in the trade in five years, 22 per cent, had been lost, which amounted to a loss of five hundred per annum. Of these, instead as had been stated, one half, only one sixteenth were landsmen. But this mortality, it had been said, might be avoided by adopting proper regulations. Then for what were those merchants accountable, who had neglected to adopt such regulation? But their whole souls were occupied with another subject---their attention was too agreeably employed upon the gross returns, to be spared to any means for preserving the lives of their fellow-creatures. The loss of Slaves during the voyage amounted to 10 per cent. If this was not the case, why had all the merchants only brought four or five voyages, instead of stating the amount of all the voyages which they had made? An exception was to be made in favour of Mr. Anderson, who had given an account of all the voyages he had made, and in whose ships the loss had been much less, in consequence of the slaves being allowed twice as much room. It had been alledged, that the African Trade was not more destructive to seamen than any other trade

trade in the tropical climates ; but with what truth it might be judged, when it was stated, that in the African Trade, there perished 20 per cent. and in the West India Trade only one and a half. If the assertion were true, the advantages of the West India Trade must soon appear in a very different light.

Captains had affirmed that there perished in the African trade as many seamen as might man one ship of the line ; if the mortality in the West India trade was equally great, our seamen would soon be exhausted. It had been stated that we had a right to the trade as well as other nations. It might be asked what was our right, upon what principle was it founded, wherein did it consist ? An Hon. Gentleman had advised us to be quiet. We were easy and happy. Happy as we might be personally, yet for the honour of humanity, it was to be hoped, that we were not happy, while so many of our fellow-creatures were miserable, and we retained in our hands, unexercised, the power of relieving them.

The same Gentleman had said, that of twenty reasons, which he might assign against abolishing the Slave Trade, he would mention only one, that the complete abolition was impossible. How was it impossible ? By abolishing it on our own part, we at least took the most direct way ; we declared our principles ; we did more---we set the example. He trusted that we should likewise set another example, by shewing that it was possible to preserve West India possessions without the importation of slaves. The loss, if any loss should result from the abolition of the Trade, would, he dared say, be never perceived. It was the continuance of the Trade which rendered the encrease of the breed of slaves imperceptible. It was stated that the abolition would be an injury to public credit. This was a mere *petitio principii*, as it was denied in the first instance that the measure would be at all hurtful to the interest of our settlements in the West Indies. If we did not abandon it, till all other nations should, we must wait for an event, which could never happen till all civilized nations should at once concur to give up a measure, which was not tenable upon the principles of justice and humanity. It was not the intention of the Committee, in bringing forward facts, to criminate the West India Planters. It was only their intention, by these facts, to
prove

prove the unprotected state of the Negroes. Wherever they had been well treated, wherever, as had been so ably stated, any one of the causes of their decrease had been removed, the breed had uniformly been found to increase. In Jamaica more males than females were employed in the Sugar Plantations---a circumstance which could not but be unfavourable to propagation. Mr. Long's account of the prejudices of the West India Planters, was more forcible indeed than any thing he should choose to say.--- He regretted the tendency of unlimited power frequently to lead to the most barbarous abuse.

He mentioned the story of a youth who had been seen in the streets, entirely naked, mortified all over, and covered with wounds, some of which were large enough to admit the finger. He had an iron collar round his neck, with spikes projecting. He was unable to sit on account of his wounds, and these spikes, which had barbarously been contrived for the purpose, would not allow him to lay. He was in this situation, not on account of any offence against the legislature, but merely as he was unable to work, his master, on the truly Christian and Apostolical principle, did not choose that he should eat.

Another story had been related by a seaman, in evidence, before the Committee---who saw an infant of nine months old, because it would not eat, charged by the Captain with sulkiness, who, swearing "D---n me, but I'll make you eat, or I will kill you," began flogging the infant till it was swelled beyond its natural size---and the surgeon, for its safety, advised that its feet should be put into hot water: the inhuman monster ordered water to be brought---into which, tho' informed it was too hot, he plunged the feet of the infant, till its nails were seen swimming on the surface, and the flesh thrivelled and dropping from the bones!---Then, with savage apathy, he ordered oil and flannel for its relief; but from its agonizing tortures Providence soon relieved it. To complete this unequalled instance of barbarous and inhuman butchery, a still more horrid deed fills the bloody scene---When this faultless, speechless babe was to be cast into the ocean, as its grave, its mother was commanded to perform this last sad office! but though a slave, her nature shrunk with horror, and indignantly she spurned the command; she then became the object of his savage ferocity, and was ordered to be

flogged; when almost expiring, and turning her eyes from the accursed act she was enforced to commit, she dropped it into its grave, and fell prostrate on the deck! [Mr. Smith was here interrupted by an universal cry of "hear," a few persons excepted, who, callous to every emotion of humanity, laughed---This seemed almost to petrify Mr. Smith, and led him to observe, that he was sorry to find a British Senate, disgraced by a smile approving of so black a conduct; and, apparently overcome by it, he sat down amid a loud cry of "hear," without further observation.]

Mr. Cawthorne said, that the story of the child, from its enormity, was impossible, as many other parts of the evidence might be refuted on the same ground. Of this there were many instances; one man said that the Captains of French Slave Ships, when they had not a sufficient quantity of water for the number on board, preferred giving them arsenick to throwing them into the sea. Another believed that the religion of Angola was the Roman Catholic. Did evidence so absurd deserve the least attention?

In deciding on a question, which involved the abolition of the Slave Trade, they would do well to recollect what was required by justice to the islands, by humanity to themselves, and by general policy. He intimated, that if the Hon. Gentleman should lose the question, as he trusted he should, he would make a motion of a different tendency.

Mr. Courtenay said, that he had last night heard the eloquent, pathetic, and forcible speech of the Hon. Gentleman who had moved the question with much sympathy and conviction. That sympathy had not been lessened, nor that conviction removed, by any thing which he had since heard on the other side. He meant now only to make a few remarks upon what had been stated by an Hon. Baronet, and another Hon. Member.---It had been said, that if we should abandon the trade, it would fall into the hands of France. But it would be recollected, with what approbation the motion of the late M. Mirabeau had been received in that country, for abolishing the trade, though the situation of their colonies abroad might not have rendered it prudent for them to have carried the measure into immediate execution. But it was not to be doubted,

doubted, that if the Parliament of this country should begin, so wise and enlightened a body as the National Assembly would quickly imitate their example. The union of the two nations, now cemented by freedom, might be supposed to render the cause of justice and humanity universal. But even though the trade should not be abandoned by other nations, yet if justice required its abolition, we ought not to hesitate with regard to the part which we were to act. But it had been alledged, that the trade was conducted upon principles of humanity. This indeed was a new species of humanity. The humanity had been stated to consist in rescuing the Negroes from their wretched situation at home. Yes, we rescued them from their situation at home; and, no doubt, much credit was due to their humanity, for the treatment which they substituted in their colonies.

The principle of savage war, it had been stated, was a general massacre. This, however, was not the fact, as would appear from the accounts of travellers: On the contrary, they frequently adopted their captives into their own families, and so far from massacring the women and children, they afforded them the protection which the weakness of sex, or age, demanded. There could be no doubt, that the practice of kidnapping prevailed. It had been said, that those were sold as slaves, who had been guilty of adultery. It was a circumstance worth being remarked, that every man was allowed six wives; and though this number could not be supposed to leave much inducement to the crime, yet it might naturally be expected to render the wives more jealous. The husband knew that he had six wives, but the wives knew that they had only one husband. It had been likewise said, that it was not very probable that the crime of witchcraft should afford a pretext for any being sold into slavery: Those who could reason upon this improbability showed themselves but little acquainted with the history of their own country. In the reign of James I. the crime of witchcraft had been created for the purpose of information. No less than sixty informations were given by one man. An Hon. Member had contended against the abolition of the Slave Trade, which had been sanctioned by twenty-six acts of Parliament; but he dared say, that it would be found that the punishment of witchcraft was sanctioned by fifty-six acts of Parliament.

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It had been stated, that the pulpit had been employed as an instrument of attack upon the Slave Trade. If this was really the case, he was happy to understand, that the pulpit had been so well employed. But he was rather apt to be doubtful of the fact, as he knew that Clergymen had obtained preferment for inculcating the doctrine that the Negroes were predestined to slavery. And he doubted not that when the Bill was carried up to the other House, the Bishops would rise up with that brave and virtuous indignation by which they were uniformly distinguished, to abolish a measure so contrary to the dictates of humanity. Every Member would recollect, that on his vote this night depended the happiness of millions, that it was in his power to sanction a measure, whose beneficial consequences would be felt over an extensive quarter of the globe, and which should sow the seeds of civilization, and establish the first principles of humanity in regions where they were formerly unknown.

Lord Carysfort said, that if he had entertained any doubts with respect to the question, they would have been completely removed, by the manner in which it was introduced, and the manner in which it had been opposed. It was worthy of attention that there was no other mode of relief for the hardships and sufferings of the Negroes than what was to be found in the resolutions of the House. The measure which was now recommended was supported by policy, as the first interest of every nation consisted in adherence to justice. If the Motion should not be carried, as he trusted it should, he hoped at least that the question would be the means of exciting the attention of the House to the defective state of the legislature with respect to the Slaves in the West Indies. The Consolidated Act of the Assembly of Jamaica, held out no relief to the Negroes. They were ordered, when guilty of an offence, to receive a punishment of thirty-nine lashes with a cart-whip.--- But what offence could be adequate to a punishment of thirty-nine lashes so inflicted? They were deprived of the right of self-defence against any white man. The importation, he stated bore no proportion to the gross number of slaves. From the increase which had taken place in the breed of slaves, he inferred that similar means might be attended with equal success in our West India possessions. He enforced the abolition of the Slave Trade, by

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considerations drawn from the policy of this country, and stated the repugnance of the practice to the principles of our constitution. Though the Trade should be taken up by other nations, yet if it was a Trade in itself disgraceful and ruinous, we should have no occasion to regret that we had abandoned it into their hands.

Col. Phipps said, that the question had been argued upon the general ground of the feelings of humanity and the rights of man. His opinion had been formed from those who had opportunities of being acquainted with it from their own experience and observation. It was to be considered where this trade was carried. The African government had been stated to be partly monarchical and partly aristocratical, yet though the distinction might hold nominally, yet in reality it was purely despotic. The condition of the Slaves were infinitely less miserable in our own colonies, than in their own country. It had been asserted, that wars were carried on for the purposes of the Slave Trade. This assertion could not be true, as from war arose the difficulty of procuring slaves. If those enormities, which had been represented, really existed, why might not inspectors be appointed, and regulations adopted, in order to effect a remedy, rather than cut off a branch of trade so useful to this country, and absolutely indispensable for the preservation of its settlements in the West Indies. If such cruelties were committed, as had been described, he owned he was willing to go to any lengths in order to prevent them. But his horror at the recital was not exceeded by his surprise. During ten months which he had spent in Jamaica, and in visits which he had paid to the other Islands, he had not occasion to remark any of those cruelties. The only severities which he had witnessed, had been exercised by Black people.

As to the argument, that the breed could be kept up without importation, founded upon the increase in some of the islands, he doubted if such increase could have been urged, had it not been for supplies which had been received from Africa. As to particular instances, which had been mentioned, of excessive cruelty, they were the fault, not of any system, but of human nature. Instances of the same sort had occurred from individuals of this country, as in the case of Mrs. Brownrigg. Why, instead of abolishing the Slave Trade, should we not guard
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it by regulation against abuse, and as it was a measure of necessity, converted into an instrument of benefit? Why should we not take the negroes from their savage state, and render them the objects of civilization, and the converts of Christianity? Even in their present state, the Indians were lively, cheerful, and happy. Their fondness for dress and baubles shewed that they were perfectly at ease in their minds, and felt no depression from their situation.---How then was humanity interested in abolishing a practice, which gave no interruption to the happiness of those who were its objects, and on the contrary, seemed to render their condition preferable to what otherwise it might have been?

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, from the hour of his having the honour to sit in Parliament to the present, among all the political or personal questions in which it had been his fortune to take a share, there never was a question in which, both from the principles it involved, and the consequences connected with it, his heart was so deeply interested. But forcibly as it appealed to the best and most unerring sensations of man, strong, and in his mind irresistible, as were the arguments that might be drawn from that source alone, he would not argue it merely as a question of feeling, although in departing from that ground, he desired it to be understood that he did not abandon it. The main strength of the arguments, advanced by those who opposed the motion of his Honourable Friend, was to bring forward an impracticability, which resolved itself into a question of expediency or inexpediency. On this ground he should examine it, observing, as a necessary precaution against misunderstanding his own sentiments, that no expediency would hinder him from assenting to it, unless it could be shewn that the legislature of a country had not a right to bind its subjects, and to restrain them from a violation of the general and fundamental principles of justice and morality. No man would contend that it was any slight ground of expediency that ought to sanction the continuance of such a trade, or that any thing short of whether the cultivation of the West India Islands could be carried on without it, so as to render them beneficial to the proprietors, and of advantage to this country, ought to make it even the subject of discussion. It had been said by those who opposed the motion,

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motion, that no adequate means of cultivation could be found, if the Slave Trade were abolished; and that if adequate means could be found, the Planters would not only cheerfully consent to adopt such means, but return their grateful thanks to those who should suggest them. From those who said so he differed widely in opinion; and although he could not but lament to find the sentiments of all those who had a more immediate interest in the decision at variance with his, and their judgment directly opposite to that which he had formed, yet he could not but think, that an excess of sensibility, and an over apprehension in a case that concerned them so nearly, had prevented them from drawing the same conclusions from the same facts as he had done; and that he and other gentlemen, who had no bias on their minds, who had no object in view, but to discover truth, were perhaps more competent judges than they were. In considering this part of the subject, he should first refer to Jamaica, both as the most important of the West India Islands, containing about one half of the number of Slaves in the whole, and as that in which they had before them the most accurate accounts of the importation and propagation.

From those documents and oral testimony of those gentlemen who had spoken in support of the contrary opinion, he trusted he should prove to the satisfaction of the Committee, that there was the prospect of securing the cultivation of the lands without any material diminution of the number of Slaves, in the first instance, and of laying the foundation of a future increase on such solid and permanent principles as could not be shaken in the natural course of things, and would render the state of the island infinitely superior to a dependence on importation.

Accounts had been made out for a series of periods of the increase of Slaves by birth, and importation, and of the decrease by casualty or death. From the first of those periods it appeared that the decrease of numbers, independent of importation, had been gradually diminishing to the last, viz. from 1768 to 1788, in which the decrease, on an average, was not more than one per cent. This decrease was owing to various causes, which, by wholesome regulations, might be removed. and when removed, as they already in a great measure were, no man would say that the natural progress of population would not keep up

up the number. The statements, however, in those calculations made the decrease much too great. He entered into a clear and accurate examination of those statements, comparing one account with another, and pointing out in what each was correct, or incorrect, from which he deduced, that allowing the number of Slaves not rated in the tax-tables to bear the same proportion to the number rated in 1768 and 1788, the decrease of numbers, independent of importation, had been less than one per cent, on an average of 20 years, and that according to the most unfavourable calculation it could not have exceeded one and three-fourths. This was the decrease on the whole number, and for the whole period; but as applied to the present time it was considerably less, because the decrease from its progressive diminution must have been greater in the former part of the period than in the latter. In that period too there had been extraordinary causes of diminution. By a succession of hurricanes and calamities such as had never occurred in any former period, 15000 slaves had been swept away. The independence of America had been another cause of decrease. By the change in the mode of supplying the islands with provisions, which had been adopted for wise reasons, and attended with beneficial effects, a short scarcity was asserted to have been felt, which naturally fell heaviest upon the Slaves. That change, however, had turned the attention of the Planters to raising provisions on the island, greatly increased the culture for that purpose, and created a rich and permanent resource against future scarcity, by which the condition of the Slaves was proportionally improved. Nor was this all. In the general accounts of deaths were included the deaths of Slaves newly imported; and these, if taken out, would shew that among the Negroes seasoned on the island, the births were more than sufficient to supply the deaths. For the first two years imported negroes could contribute nothing to the general stock by birth, but much to the general mortality; for it was admitted, that nearly one half of them died in the seasoning.

Of those who were landed in health, although what sort of health they could enjoy after such a voyage, it was not easy to conceive, but of those who, according to the term used in the market, were said to be in health, one-fourth died; and of those who came loaded with such

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foul and loathsome diseases, as the house in its enquiries had been compelled to look upon more than a half, making together at the lowest computation one third of the whole. This on 6000, the average number annually imported, amounted to little short of one per cent. on the whole number in the island. From all these considerations it was clear that the decrease of population was not more than three fourths per cent. and would it be contended, that to stop so small a decrease was beyond the power of such regulation as benevolence, humanity, and, he might add, interest, would readily point out.

Were then the importation of Slaves to be stopped, this small decrease of numbers would go on gradually lessening, till, in the course of 14 or 15 years, as the disproportion between the sexes, which the importation alone kept up, ceased to operate, it would intirely disappear, and a gradual increase take place. If to this was added the effect to be expected from regulations and a better mode of treatment, not from regulations enjoined by the legislature, but from that most active and vigilant of all regulations, regulation proceeding from a near and urgent sense of interest, from the necessity imposed on every planter of taking care that the treatment of his Slaves was as mild and humane as the condition of Slavery would admit.--- This, an abolition of the importation alone could effect; and when it was effected, could there be a doubt that the foundation would be laid of a sure and permanent increase of the numbers, not more pleasing to sentiments of humanity than highly beneficial to the colonies?

In proving this, he had proved more than he was called upon to prove; it was sufficient for his argument that no great inconvenience would attend the abolition; and he rejoiced that the effect of the system brought forward by his Hon. Friend would be not only putting an end to a traffic inhuman and disgraceful, but increasing the success and prosperity of our colonies. In all the calculations through which he had gone, he could afford to give up three fourths of what he was intitled to take, and still his conclusion would be good. If there was any credit due to reasoning from facts and experience, that conclusion was entitled to the most implicit belief. But admitting, for the sake of argument, what he was not called on to admit; that the number of Slaves would decrease for a few years after the abolition, what would be the consequence?

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quence? That the number of imported Slaves would be diminished, and the number of Creoles encreased, the latter, by their own acknowledgement, much more valuable than the former.

Would any diminution that could be apprehended be of such magnitude as to counter-balance this advantage, independent of the happiness of being released from the necessity of that importation which they had felt so long to be a burden and a curse? They said, that they were desirous of improving the condition of their Slaves. That which improved the condition and the value of the imported slave, would improve equally the condition and the value of the Creole, and contribute two-fold to the consequences he had stated. This was intimately connected with another question, viz. the condition of the descendants of those Slaves. The hasty inconsiderate abolition of Slavery in the West Indies, which had been imputed to those who brought forward the abolition of the Slave Trade, had never entered into the imagination of any rational man. In the condition into which we had brought them, a rash emancipation before the objects of it were instructed to use with discretion the gift that was given them, would be to commit a breach of duty, not to confer a benefit; but it was impossible not to say, that as the means of instruction was given them, they ought to be gradually released from the abject state of servitude, in which they now were, and put under the full protection of the law. - If this was a desirable object, how was it to be obtained if the importation continued?

Take away that, and the difficulty would vanish.--- Instruction, much more than any regulation, would improve their value, and far beyond the compensation for the pains in bestowing it, be the means of atonement and expiation for the miseries inflicted on so many generations. That their value would increase with the degree of their freedom, was no wild speculation of his. It was founded on the general principles of human nature, and sanctioned by the invariable testimony of human experience.

In those islands where Slaves had one day in the week to themselves, although worn down and exhausted by six days labour, it was acknowledged that they improved the time that was given them, and in some cases raised their own provisions. Such would always be the case. They would be industrious when they felt that they had an interest

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terest in their industry; and when they had the natural springs of human action, they would rise to the dignity of human energy.

On these grounds he was convinced, that the decrease of Slaves by an immediate stop to the importation would be inconsiderable; that it would be temporary; that it would gradually diminish; and that it would be followed by a great and permanent advantage, with all the other benefits that he had stated. These reasons, tho' drawn from the state of Jamaica alone, as far as the information went, were applicable to the other islands. He went into the same sort of detail respecting the progress of population in each, and concluded, that except in Grenada and St. Vincent's, which had not been so long in our possession as the rest, there was no danger of any material decrease of numbers, by stopping importation. What exception might be made in favour of these, it would be for the wisdom of the House to consider; but surely they would not say, that if the Abolition might be effected in four fifths of the whole, the accidental circumstances of the other fifth, for which a remedy could be found, ought not to stand in the way. He hoped he had shewn that there was no interest endangered, which the Committee could, in the face of the world oppose to the suggestions of their feelings, and the dictates of their consciences. Mr. Pitt said, having gone so much at length into the question of expediency, he should say a few words, and but a few, on the other parts of the subject. What was the state of the trade? When he looked to Africa, and the state of the governments on the Slave Coast, all of them, under whatever form, more or less despotic, the consequences to be inferred were exactly such as they appeared in evidence. If where the restraints on those in power were few and feeble, any trade was offered which applied to their passions, it was at once a call upon them to commit abuses, and must produce all the evils that were attributed to it.--- We sent them what they were most desirous of obtaining, for which we expected but one return, viz. Slaves. That return, when they had it not, it was evident they would take the means to find, and for all the excesses, the murders and rapine which they committed, we, who held out the temptation, were justly answerable. That the unhappy victims sold to us, were prisoners of war, or persons convicted of crimes, as had been alledged, was impossible.

impossible. Could any man suppose that a demand which was constant and regular, could be supplied by means that were casual and fluctuating? When we wanted Slaves we always found that they were to be obtained. Was it to be believed, that war and convictions outrun our demands, and not that they were proportioned to that demand. Alas! we made human beings the objects of an abominable commerce, and then denied them the benefit of a commercial calculation. Let any man look at the numbers exported, the extent and population of the country whence they were taken, and say, if he could, that they could be supplied but by commencing war, for the sake of prisoners, and creating crimes for the sake of the conviction? It was next said, that as prisoners of war, or convicted criminals, they would be condemned to indiscriminate slaughter were not this profitable mode of disposing of them prevented. This was assuming that it was the practice of all savages to slaughter their captives, which was not true, and if it were true, the practice was not perpetual; for as they advanced in civilization, the barbarous custom, whenever it had existed, was discontinued. It was assuming also, that they did not kill their prisoners from the first fury of passion, but kept them till that had subsided, and their minds were free to consider whether to kill or spare. It was in evidence that they had slaves among themselves, that a man was thought rich in proportion to his number, and that they did actually employ those very wretches who were destined for sale, till they found a purchaser.

It was therefore reasonable to infer that they would keep those captives as an accession to their stock of slaves, and employ them in some way or other, were not the greater temptation of our trade held out to them.

Their Princes might be supposed to consult sometimes the interest of the community, were it not for our perverted system which set his interest at irreconcilable variance with that of his people. An Hon. Baronet had said, that witchcraft which had been stated as a crime, invented for the sake of the conviction, meant poisoning. But whatever it meant, was it to be supposed that the crime itself could be so common, or that were it not invented for the sake of the conviction, the punishment would be, not the death or slavery of the offender, but the death or **slavery**

slavery of his whole family and kindred? Of all these evils, of pretended wars, fictitious crimes, and inhuman punishments, we were the cause, while this trade continued.

We were not only the cause of all the existing evils, but we intercepted from the country the ordinary dispensations of Providence, the natural progress of civilization, and instead of communicating any of the blessings which we enjoyed, continued it in darkness, in ignorance, and in blood. Let us look at the map of Africa, and consider, that while every other quarter of the globe had been deriving knowledge and improvement by communication, it alone had remained unimproved, and unexplored.

Let us reflect how long we had been acquainted with its coasts, and that of the interior parts we had yet no knowledge but by this horrid intercourse. He would not pursue the wretched victims through the horrors of their passage, which, whoever had contemplated, must be convinced that no regulation could render fit for human eyes to look on, and which alone, as an evil neither to be remedied nor tolerated, he should think a sufficient reason for an abolition. If he followed them to the West Indies the only substantial hope of their condition there being rendered fit to be endured, depended on the abolition of the trade. If, therefore, the consequences to be apprehended, were almost as painful as they had been represented, he should think it an act of indispensable duty to the unalterable principles of humanity and justice, to vote for that abolition; but what must be the aggravation of refusing to vote it, when no evil consequences whatever could reasonably be feared. He had never discharged any duty to the public more cheerfully, than in stating his reasons for this vote, and whether successful or not, he should enjoy the consolation of having endeavoured to rescue his country from the opprobrium and disgrace of a traffic in human blood.

Mr. Alderman Watson said, that if humanity were concerned in the question, he should be as ready to support that cause as any man. The fact was, however, that the natives of Africa were taken from a worse state of slavery in their own country, to one more mild. The abolition of the trade, he contended, would ruin the West Indies, destroy our Newfoundland fishery, which the slaves in the West Indies supported by consuming that part of the

the fish, which was fit for no other consumption, and consequently by cutting off the great source of seamen, annihilate our marine.

Mr. Fox said, that he would not at so late an hour, and when the House was so much exhausted, detain them long. Indeed there never was less occasion for argument, than on the present question; for in addition to its own merits, it had received so much brilliant illustration from the Gentlemen who had spoken, that he should not have risen, but that he thought it did not become him to give a silent vote on such a topic. Allusions had been made to expressions of his in a former debate as much too harsh and opprobrious to be warrantable. Notwithstanding his great personal respect for some of the Gentlemen who had complained of those expressions, and for many of those to whom they might be supposed to apply, although they had had twenty-four hours for reflection, if after perusing the body of evidence on the Table, Gentlemen should still think that a traffic in human flesh was fit to be endured, he must still say, that, in his opinion, they were hard of heart, or difficult of understanding.

It had been said, that Parliament had long permitted this trade; that they had not only permitted, but authorized it. The guilt of authorizing such a trade, he should not attempt to extenuate; but there was a wide difference, indeed, between neglecting to put a stop to cruelty and injustice, when the objects were not immediately under their consideration, and giving their solemn sanction to such a system, after long investigation and grave debate, with all the proofs of its enormity full in their view. If the decision of the Committee (which God avert!) should be in favour of the Trade, they would incur more guilt and disgrace in the eyes of God and the world, than their predecessors, by all that they had authorized and all that they had permitted.

No man would suspect him of prizing political liberty, too lightly; it was a great and inestimable blessing which men could not be too anxious to preserve or to obtain; but when compared with personal liberty, that personal liberty without which, one man became the slave of the interest or caprice of another, it appeared of no account. That the natural course of propagation was sufficient to keep up the stock of Negroes in the West India Islands,

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the speech of the Hon. Gentleman who moved the abolition had fully convinced him. The speech of the Right Honourable Gentleman, who had lately spoken, would have convinced him, had the former speech never been made. The Right Hon. Gentleman had argued it fully and clearly, blameable only in one respect, that by insisting so minutely on the point of expediency, he might seem to detract from the force of the other arguments. It never would have been a question in his mind; for if the natural increase of negroes in the West Indies had not been equal to the natural decrease, he should have said at once, and insisted on it as an incontrovertible argument, that their treatment was such as the human species could not subsist under. If he were told that in any country horses were used, but seldom bred---and it was not his fault that he was reduced to the degrading necessity of speaking of human creatures as of horses---he should say the reason was, that the people of that country found it cheaper to purchase horses than to rear them.

The Legislature, therefore, by suffering the traffic, doomed the unhappy Blacks to the usage which they suffered. Destroy the trade, and they must treat them well in their own defence. How they were treated, and how the whole of the trade was conducted, it required only that they should peruse the evidence on the Table to know---and after reading that evidence, persons who could stand up in that House, and give a vote for its continuance, must have nerves of which he had no conception. Human sacrifices, he knew, had been made in all the ages of man; and ancient history produced instances of sacrifices, where all the natural ties of the heart were broken; but in such instances---a Brutus justified the act by self-reasoning: He filled his mind with an heroic sentiment of love for his country. But all these instances of sacrifices fell and diminished to nothing, in comparison of this wholesale sacrifice of a whole order and race of our fellow-creatures, and he trusted that no gentleman would be so hard of heart as to vote for the continuance of this system of sacrifice, without having at least better reasons to urge in his justification than he had yet heard. What was this African trade? A traffic for human beings to be torn from their country by force, in order to be subjected to the will, caprice, and tyranny of other human beings,

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for their natural lives, and their posterity for ever. Such was the trade.

Three ways had been stated of obtaining the Slaves: The first was war; and this was a very extraordinary means, for he contended that the war was not the cause, but the result of the Slave Trade; and while they talked of the freedom of mankind, they extended the Royal Prerogative, and the right of Kings, to that extravagant degree, that they asserted the propriety of creating war amongst their subjects, for the purpose of bringing them to public sale. The next method was kidnapping, and this was a principle which we had it upon evidence, had been carried to a very great length. This principle was nothing else than that the strongest kidnapped the weakest; and when any quarrel was between two of them, we were always ready to offer our mediation, by carrying off and kidnapping both. The last was our assisting to preserve the police of Africa. And in this virtuous intention of going forth to assist in the police of Africa, what were the crimes which we lent our assistance to punish? Adultery was one great crime which we went to Africa to punish. Now, strongly as he was disposed to punish the crime of adultery, when committed in a cultivated society, under the government of laws; and where marriage was a spiritual and legal rite, he could not help thinking it very odd, that we should be guilty of the duplicity of setting that up as a pretext in a country not blest with civilization, and where marriage was unknown, for dragging away a miserable man from his home into captivity.

The next crime was witchcraft. This, the reason and intelligence of England knew to be a crime impossible and absurd; but still we lent ourselves to the superstition of the place, and instead of interfering to snatch a fellow creature from his fate, we stood by to become the instruments of his torture. The poor creature suspected of witchcraft, was turned over to the civilized, polished and humane English, to be made a slave, because he was a witch.--- And, after all, from whatever cause, or by whatever means we obtained them; let it be asked how we sent them from Africa to the place where they were destined. It had been argued, that their situation, when labouring under the severest and hardest discipline in the West India islands, was better than in their own country; by which, he sup-

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posed it was meant that they were in a bad way when taken off, and the worst possible when on board the vessel that carried them; and therefore their situation must be better when they got out of her: but to describe what it was when on board, was not within the power of words, nor did he know any thing that could at all exemplify the horror of their voyage in any degree, except he had the section of a slave ship to exhibit to the House: But that it exceeded every idea that a person who had never seen it could form from the strongest description that could be given, he would not hesitate to assert.

It had been frequently asserted, there were no instances of cruelty in a Sovereign; and that people were not oppressed, except where despotism was joined with insanity---and that much might be left to the natural impulse and feelings of man. He confessed, he was not willing to trust the condition of any part of the human race to so precarious a feeling. Much as he was willing to concede to the influence of the benign passions, in a breast that knew what was due to its fellow creatures, he was afraid that cruelty advanced in an encreasing ratio, as man approached to a state of despotism. The despotic Monarchs of Europe were not often cruel, because philosophy, which had not stript them of their power, had qualified the exercise of it by the polish of manners, which it had spread over the kingdoms where they reigned; but did not history furnish them with too many instances of cruelty which could not be ascribed to insanity. Who ever imputed the crimes of Caligula to madness, or found an apology for Nero in the derangement of intellect? Did Domitian practice his enormities through a defect of understanding? or were the horrid acts of Caracalla, or the extravagant impurities of Heliogobulus, or the collected vices of Commodus, accounted for by insanity? Yet tho' insanity, in the usual order of things, was a rare calamity, there were six Emperors, all bearing indeed the name of Cæsar, but of different lineage, and of distinct blood, all practising cruelties of the most horrid kind, for which no excuse had ever been made.

Why then should we trust so large a portion of the human race to so capricious a security as man's nature in a state of despotic authority, when that race might be so much more securely protected by a system of law?

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He would not draw their attention to the enormities practised on the unhappy people in the West Indies, as too lamentably exhibited in the body of evidence on the table. He was assured that no gentleman would be disposed to boast of the humane and benevolent treatment they met with in the islands; but, though he would not dwell on the instances of savage barbarity contained in the minutes, there were one or two that, however violent to his own feelings, and to the humanity of the House, he would just mention. It was stated, in the evidence of a gentleman of unimpeached integrity, that in one of the French islands, (and, perhaps, he said, gentlemen might endeavour to find consolation on account of its being a French island, although he was afraid there was no great reason to boast of the distinction) a planter had a slave who had run away from him, and who he feared might commit the abominable crime of running away again: He sent for a surgeon, and directed him to cut off one of his legs: The surgeon remonstrated a good deal against the abominable cruelty of the act; and finding this of no avail, he positively refused to comply with the cruel and inhuman request. The planter said, he would make it the duty of the surgeon to comply; and saying thus, he actually broke the man's leg---broke and smashed it by the application of force, and then turning to the surgeon, said, "Now, Sir, you will do your duty, and cut off the mangled limb to save that fellow's life."

The other instance that he would mention was not in a French island. A gentleman heard the screams of a female negro from the inside of a hedge. He saw through the hedge a woman suspended by the two arms to a tree, and swinging to and fro; but her screams were so horrible and heart piercing, that he could not conceive that they proceeded entirely from this torture. He made his way through the fence, and he found the author of her torture standing with a lighted torch, which, as he swung his helpless victim from side to side, he applied to every part of her body by turns---to torture, but not to kill her---to keep her in agony that made the blood curdle, but to imagine---"I know not," exclaimed Mr. Fox, "what might be the crime of the poor sufferer; but grant that it was the worst possible crime that the human heart could conceive, such punishment was base, horrid, and unpardonable."

pardonable. I see," continued he, "that your hearts are unable to bear these tortures, and yet you will sanctify them by law. Humanity, Sir, does not consist in a squeamish ear. It belongs to the mind as well as the nerves, and leads a man to take measures for the prevention of cruelty, which the hypocritical cant of humanity contents itself with deploring. What do we do? In our indignation of justice, we condemn to death a low pilferer---a pickpocket or a highwayman---and the same legislature that makes such crimes, which, comparatively, may be called innocence itself, sanctifies the pillage, robberies, and murders of this horrid trade! What is the consequence of this compromise?

"That it unsettles the principles of justice in the minds of men---it takes from the Legislature the strong hold which it ought to have in its character, and the influence which it would derive from integrity and consistence.---It is as much necessary in sound policy, as it is in justice and honour, to abolish a trade which militates against our own morals and police at home, as well as against our national character abroad."

The first answer that had been made to the objections, Mr. Fox said, was, that the Africans were miserable in their own country, and therefore there was no harm in taking them away. If they were unhappy, it was their own misfortune; but was it not a very unaccountable mode of bettering their condition? What right had we to force upon them a new condition? "If we are unhappy," they might say, "leave us at least the comforts we have---the liberty of our native, though naked plains---the social relations of life---the natural exercise of the functions with which we are endowed; they belong inherently to us, and you have no right to change, even to better, our condition." But it was ridiculous to say, that their condition was bettered: when forcibly divided from every thing that was dear to them in life, they were to be sunk and degraded into the state of personal slaves to fellow-creatures---to creatures perhaps much more feeble in mind and body than themselves. The second argument he had heard was from the Honourable Alderman who spoke last; and though the subject was too serious to countenance any thing facetious, he could not help saying, that there was something in the argument irresistably laughable.

laughable. "The utility of the African Trade, said the Alderman, was manifested in the support which it gave to our nursery of seamen; for the Slaves eat the refuse of the fish taken at Newfoundland, and which were too bad for any other market!" This argument seriously advanced, was curious. The Trade was to be supported, because the Slaves eat fish so bad as that no other persons would eat them, and thereby supported the nursery for seamen!---Was this also a proof that we bettered their condition, by carrying them to our Islands? The third argument against the Abolition, and the argument of most weight, was, that though the English might be ready to render up this Trade, other nations were not; and it was asked, if we were ready to sacrifice so much of our trade to France, Spain, Holland, &c. This argument of gain; however it might be addressed to Gentlemen, certainly deserved little weight if seriously considered; for what did it amount to---That we enjoyed a gainful trade which we confessed we were ashamed of---But what signifies our giving it up---the poor Africans will be no better!

The French, Spaniards, and Dutch, will oppress them in the same way, and we shall only lose the profits. Such was the train of reasoning. Just in the same way might a common robber argue; when exhorted to relinquish his vices and amend his life. "It is true, he might say, I am sensible of my crimes; but what will the world gain by my repentance.---If I do not take your purse at this corner, I know to a certainty that some more of the gang will stop you a mile further---you will certainly lose your purse, and I shall lose it too." Away with such reasoning! It was time for men to think that there were other objects in good governments than mere gain. It was certain that they were not legislators for the universe, and that they could not dictate to other nations; but let them set a good and wholesome example---let them be the first to act right, and there was no doubt but there would soon be followers and imitators of their example. No man, he was persuaded, could view the question in its true aspect, and suffer his understanding to be bewildered by these arguments. Equally false and irrational was the monstrous proposition, that through all the various nations of Africa from which this deplorable traffic was supplied, their fellow creatures were in a lower state of intelligence with themselves;

selves, and that they were born to subjection: In all countries, and among all the classes of men, he trusted there were instances of enlightened spirits, of superior endowments, of hearts as pregnant with honour, and of minds as truly illuminated by genius, as they could boast in the polished climate of England; and he had no doubt, in the indiscriminate career of this trade, we frequently trampled on men of souls as high and sensible as any Europe could boast. They had, in the evidence on the table, a memorable instance in point. In a slave-ship, during the passage, a gentleman heard an unusual clang of chains, and murmur of mental agony. He was induced to enquire the cause of such misfortune. In explanation, he learned, that the miserable captive, having attained an unusual moment of repose, was dreaming that he was at the head of his troops, surrounded by his friends, and swaying the sceptre that had been wielded by his ancestors! Awaking, however, in the agonies of disappointment, he found the fantastic vision of happiness was fled, and that he was himself chained in the wretched and contracted pittance of a slave, and joined to the meanest, and perhaps, except his oppressors, the vilest of his species. The horror of the contrast, from dreaming delusion to waking certainty, threw him into a paroxysm that filled the ship with horror. The noble strugglings of an ingenuous mind; the exalted feelings of high birth and station, thus unworthily degraded and persecuted, must naturally excite those agonizing transports which excited the attention of the stranger---

For sighs and groans by nature grow from pain.

Mr. Fox, with great energy, called on Gentlemen to make it their own case. To suppose what might happen---that in some improbable turn of human affairs, England should be overrun with a tribe as savage as Englishmen were on the coast of Africa; and that they carried into slavery a number of the people of England. From what class of Englishmen, however low and uneducated, could they find men so generally dull and senseless as to have no feeling to the wretchedness of personal slavery.

What arrogance and blasphemy was it then to suppose, that Providence had not endowed men with equal feelings in other countries! Let them look to the words of our Saviour---Let them deeply weigh one of the most splendid

did doctrines of the Christian dispensation---a doctrine, which more, perhaps, than any other, served to illustrate the unparalleled beauty and grandeur of that most amiable of all religions---a doctrine before which slavery was forced to fly; and to which doctrine he attributed the memorable and glorious fact, that, soon after the establishment of Christianity in Europe, human slavery was abolished---The doctrine was, "High and low, rich and poor, are equal in the sight of God." Here was a doctrine which required only to be duly impressed on the heart of man, to extinguish the term *slave*; and, accordingly, what all the ancient systems of philosophy had failed to do, Christianity accomplished; and yet, in the ancient Philosophies, we found a liberality, and views of human rights, as perfect as in any of the theories of the present day. It would be idle in him to pay so false a compliment to any of the great names that adorned the present day, as to say that there were men now alive more capable of delivering the truths of an enlightened philosophy, and a commanding eloquence, than Demosthenes and Cicero---that there were historians and writers more capable of asserting the rights of men, and the dignity of nature, than Tacitus and Thucydides---and yet, these men were contented to live in States where men were slaves. It was in his mind, to the pure light which this great doctrine of our Saviour gave to the heart of man, that the abolition of slavery was to be ascribed. He knew that there were men who ascribed every improvement in the condition of the human race, to the enlightened philosophy of this day. He was willing to allow much to its happy and progressive influence. Then why not proceed on this philosophy if they denied it to the power of devotion?---Let each party ascribe it to the influence that he favoured; but as both the Philosopher and Christian pursued the same end, though by different means, why not pursue it with the temper and meekness which the moving powers were calculated to inspire? It was asked, what was to be done by this motion? He would say what he supposed the Hon. Mover would do. He would bring in a Bill, the blanks of which, as to the time of commencing its operations, the gentlemen most interested would assist in filling up; and though he should be for its immediate operation,

ration, the House might yield to them a more distant period---But

————If it were done when 'tis done,

Then it were well 'twere done quickly.

He said, that if, unfortunately, they should fail now, he would pledge himself, in whatever situation he might be in that House, to give to the proposition his whole attention and influence, as often as it should come on; and he trusted it would be regularly brought forward until the wisdom of Parliament should deliver the nation and the age from the ignominy of the shocking trade. It had been too much considered as a matter of gain. Gain, as he had said, was not the first purpose of a well regulated government, nor even the second purpose. Honour was greatly above gain---and justice was greatly above honour. He trusted that they would convince the world that they were not so devoted to gain as to sacrifice the principles of general justice---of that justice which it became them to extend to all the world, and which they could not refuse without a breach of national honour; and this they would do, if they did not cordially agree with the Hon. Gentleman in the Abolition of this accursed trade. Mr. Fox said, that if it were asked whether they meant also to abolish slavery in the West Indies, he would candidly say, that he was sorry he could not go so far.---It was possible for men to be slaves so long, as to make it dangerous all at once to give them liberty---as a man might be blind so long as to make it delicate for a surgeon all at once to open his eyes. But he did not think the condition of men born and brought up in slavery, so deplorable as was his who, born and brought to man's estate in freedom, had been snatched by violence from his home, and reduced to subjection. Mr. Fox illustrated this difference with his usual masterly painting; and concluded a speech, of which nothing but the lateness of the hour has made us give so imperfect an image, with repeating his pledge of continuing, in all situations, to exert himself for the accomplishment of this object.

The gallery was then cleared; after which Mr. Burke, Mr. Drake, and Mr. Wilberforce spoke. The Committee then divided, Ayes, 88---Noes, 163
Majority against the Abolition, 75.

The

The following Correspondence was occasioned by Mr. WILBERFORCE'S Speech in the Debate on the Slave Bill,

SIR,

I T was with much surprize I was informed upon coming to town on Tuesday last, that in your Speech, the preceding evening, upon the Slave Trade, you had treated my name with great severity, and I was the more astonished at it, as I was not conscious of having in any one instance provoked your resentment, having never intermeddled in that particular business, further than when publicly called upon to give evidence either to the Privy Council or to Parliament. If that evidence was not satisfactory to you, I am sorry for it, I gave it fairly and honestly, not prejudiced by habits, for I have not been in the habit of trading for Slaves, not biassed by interest, for I have no interest in the present Question, nor had I any attachment, except that sacred attachment to truth, which no consideration would tempt me to depart from.

Had my evidence been either evasive, prevaricating or contradictory, it would have deserved the severest animadversions, and I should justly have incurred the indignation of you and every other Gentleman in the House; but in a very long and very fatiguing examination, where it was almost impossible to avoid confusion, had I attempted to deliver a fabricated testimony, I think I may safely challenge you to adduce a single answer which I am not able to defend.

I must, therefore, beg leave to submit to your feelings, as a gentleman, how far the heat of argument and the honest zeal you have manifested, can justify to your own mind, insinuations against the fair fame of a man who has the satisfaction to have passed many years in various stations of life, with a character as yet unimpeached.

I must intreat you will have the goodness to refer to my testimony as taken down by the Clerks, if upon such reference you find you have through inadvertence or forgetfulness, applied my particular name to general descriptions of evidence, or stated as evidence of fact, what was delivered only as matter of opinion, or if you shall discover that in the course of your Speech, you have from the causes above alluded to, either warped, mutilated, or misstated my evidence, so as to give it any other than the plain

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plain and obvious meaning; by which my reputation may be affected, and my veracity brought into question, I am convinced your good sense, the liberality of your mind, and your love of justice, will prompt you to take the earliest opportunity of acknowledging any inaccuracies, into which a laudable eagerness in a cause espoused from the most noble principles, may have betrayed you.

In your Speech upon this occasion, you were pleased to allude to my testimony on another, and as it appears in the newspapers, what I said on that subject, is so misstated that (to say nothing of my moral turpitude) the grossest folly is imputed to me; I am charged with having said that I had never *heard* of such a thing as the Adulteration of Wine. Reflections on my understanding I can easily submit to, but when they are adduced as a proof of the laxity of my morals, I confess I feel the imputation with no small degree of pungency.

I beg you will consider this letter as an appeal to your feelings, from a man who regards a reflection upon his character, uncontradicted, unatoned for, as the greatest misfortune he could labour under, a misfortune which is aggravated by a consideration that the attack comes not from the levity of an idle declaimer, but from the gravity of a Senator, distinguished for his virtues, and the soundness of his understanding; a man who is not supposed capable of a premeditated injury, but willing to make reparation, where he has undesignedly offended.

I am, with much respect, SIR,

Your obedient and very humble servant,

(Signed) JOHN BARNES.

Little St. Helen's, April 21, 1791.

William Wilberforce, Esq.

Clapham, Monday, April 25, 1791.

SIR,

YOU do me more than justice in supposing that so far from offering any one a premeditated injury, I shall never be backward to make reparation where I may have given undesigned offence, and must therefore begin by declaring very sincerely, that I am sorry any thing which fell from me, in the House of Commons, should have given you so much uneasiness; nor can I conceive this

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would have been the case, if you had not received an erroneous account of what I said. I am the rather inclined to this opinion, because of the expression of which you make use, "fabricated testimony," and other terms of similar import. Whereas neither then, nor at any time, either in public or private, have I ever expressed or imputed to you an intention to deceive. For that very reason and on account of my believing your private character to be respectable, (a sentiment which to the best of my recollection, I expressed on my legs) I selected you as a fitter instance of the influence of prejudice; for you must excuse my saying that I certainly was in no degree convinced by what you said, and that I could only ascribe to the force of habitual and inveterate prejudice, your denial of the possibility of facts, which appeared to me to be proved in innumerable instances, by indisputable testimony.

My allusion to the declaration you made at the bar, when examined before the House of Commons on the Wine Bill, "that you knew nothing of the adulteration of Wine, was meant more as a joke than ought else, and as such I am clear it was taken, nor have I ever thought so much of the force of the expressions as since I perused your letter.

I am, SIR,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

(Signed) W. WILBERFORCE.

John Barnes, Esq.

SIR,

I return you my sincere and hearty thanks for your polite and very obliging favour of the 25th inst. which I received upon coming to town yesterday; you have said every thing I could desire, for the satisfaction of my own particular feelings, and I am far from being so unreasonable as to expect you should be convinced by any opinion of mine; the more especially when that opinion has been contradicted by the testimony of positive facts.

But though the letter which you have done me the honour to write has set my mind perfectly at ease, so far as it satisfies me that no imputation was intended against my character; yet I must beg leave to submit to your own good sense, and to your feelings as a gentleman, whether something further is not necessary to remove that stain which

which my reputation has actually suffered, either by the misconception of people in the House, or by the erroneous account of your speech in the newspapers; in a case of so delicate a nature as this, I would not presume to suggest any particular remedy, if it were not from an apprehension that you might imagine I expected unreasonable concessions, and in order to prove that I have not the most remote wish for any thing of that kind, I have taken the liberty to write underneath, what I think might be proper to insert as an article in the Diary. If this should meet your ideas, it will give me infinite pleasure; if not, you will lay me under a lasting obligation, by favouring me with your authority for the insertion of any other paragraph which may be more agreeable to your own feelings, and which may answer the purpose desired.

I am, with much respect, Sir, your most obedient,

And most humble servant,

(Signed)

JOHN BARNES.

Little St. Helen's, April 27, 1791.

William Wilberforce, Esq.

Proposed for Insertion.

In the accounts given by the papers of Mr. Wilberforce's Speech in the House of Commons, on Monday the 18th instant, some imputations are stated to have been made on the character of Mr. Barnes, as an evidence.

We have authority from Mr. Wilberforce to declare, that he had not the most remote design of impeaching the veracity of Mr. Barnes, or of throwing any reflection on his character.

Clapham, April 29, 1791.

SIR,

I must repeat it, that if, as you apprehend, your reputation has suffered in consequence of a misconception or mistatement of what fell from me the other night, in the House of Commons, I am very sorry for it, and I should be glad to remove your disquietude, if I could do it with propriety; but the mode you have suggested, of my authorising the insertion of a paragraph in the newspaper, correcting

correcting their misstatement, is one which I think would be neither serviceable to you, nor becoming to myself.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,
(Signed) W. WILBERFORCE.

John Barnes, Esq.

Little St. Helen's, May 2, 1791.

SIR,

On the 28th ultimo, I was obliged to go into Hampshire, and upon my return here this evening, I was sorry to find by your favour of the 29th, that you did not approve the mode which I took the liberty to suggest, in my letter of the 27th, for the removal of any unfavourable impressions of me, occasioned by your Speech on the 18th; and as you have not thought proper to offer any other mode of doing that public justice to my character, which the present case gives me a fair right to expect, I must take the liberty to avail myself of the only means in my power, that of publishing your letter to me of the 25th; it being my wish, however, to avoid as much as possible whatever may in any degree hurt your feelings. I shall delay this publication for two or three days, that if you can propose any other expedient, more agreeable to yourself, I may have the satisfaction of adopting it in preference.

I am, with much respect, Sir,

Your most humble, and most obedient Servant,
(Signed) JOHN BARNES.

Wm. Wilberforce, Esq.

Palace Yard, Wednesday morning, May 4.

SIR,

On my return home last night, I found your letter of the 2d instant, in reply to which I can only say, I can have no objection to your publishing my letter of the 25th of April, adding only, that in that case I must beg you to publish the whole of our correspondence.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient, and humble Servant,
(Signed) W. WILBERFORCE.

John Barnes, Esq.

The EDITOR avails himself of this Opportunity in presenting to the Public the HEADS of the SIERRA LEONE BILL, a PETITION from the MERCHANTS of LIVERPOOL, and the LETTERS from DETECTOR.

HEADS of a BILL, for incorporating certain persons therein named and described, and their successors, by the name and stile of the ST. GEORGE'S BAY COMPANY, and to enable his Majesty, his heirs and successors, to grant certain lands at SIERRA LEONE, on the Western Coast of Africa, to the said Company.

PREAMBLE.

WHEREAS the establishing of a general trade and commerce from this country to and with the western coast of Africa, and from thence to and with the several interior kingdoms and countries of that continent, would be highly beneficial to the manufactories and other trading interests of this country :

And Whereas the interior countries of the said continent have not hitherto been explored by Europeans, nor hath any regular trade ever been carried on therewith from this country, nor can such undertakings be now engaged in and supported without a very large capital :

And Whereas it is also necessary for the parties engaging therein, that they should have *the sole and absolute possession* of some district of land on the said coast, where they may form a factory or settlement for their servants, a secured depository for their goods and merchandize, and safe harbour for their shipping :

And Whereas Robert Hunter, of the city of London, merchant, Henry Thornton, of the said city, Esq. and Philip Sanfom, of the said city, merchant, and divers other gentlemen and merchants, have already formed themselves into a society, and agreed to subscribe considerable sums of money for the purpose of establishing and carrying on such trade and commerce, but are apprehensive that difficulties may arise as well in recovering debts which may grow due to the joint stock, as in defending suits or actions which may be commenced or brought against the subscribers, for any matter or thing relative to the society ; as by law all the several subscribers and proprietors to and in the society must in such cases both sue and be sued, im-

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plead and be impleaded by their several and distinct names and descriptions; and are desirous to prevent the several subscribers and proprietors from becoming liable to the payment of any sum or sums of money beyond their respective shares in such capital joint stock:

And Whereas many persons who are not now liable to become bankrupts within the intent and meaning of any of the laws now in force concerning bankrupts, are likewise fearful of subscribing money to carry on the laudable purposes of the said society, as by becoming subscribers to, and part owners of the said capital joint stock, they may be liable to have commissions of bankrupt issued against them, as traders:

It is enacted,

1. That the society shall be incorporated by the name of *The St. George's Bay Company*, and may have a Common Seal, &c.

2. That the Company may purchase and hold freehold lands and hereditaments, not exceeding the annual value of 2000l.

3. That it shall be lawful for the corporation to raise a capital stock not exceeding 500,000l. and that the said stock shall be divided into shares of 50l. each.

4. That persons subscribing shall be intitled to a share in the said capital stock, in proportion to the subscription and to the profits attending the same, and that the members shall be answerable for all just debts to the full amount of their shares, but no further.

5. That it shall not be lawful for the corporation to borrow any money, except by such subscriptions for such shares.

6. That it shall not be lawful for the corporation to deal in slaves.

7. That there shall be chosen from amongst the members 13 Directors (of whom one is to be Chairman, and another Deputy-Chairman) for the management of the affairs of the corporation.

8. That the first election of Directors shall be within 30 days from the passing of the act.

9. That subsequent elections shall be made annually.

10 to 38. Are usual clauses relating to the modes of election, holding courts, qualifications, making bye-laws, and other common regulations in acts of incorporation.

39. And

39. And for the better and more effectually establishing and carrying on the trade and business of the said corporation, *Be it further enacted* by the authority aforesaid, That it shall and may be lawful for his Majesty, his heirs, and successors, to make unto the said corporation a grant by Letters Patent, under the Great Seal of Great Britain, of so much, and such part of all that tract or district of land, situate and being at *Sierra Leone*, on the said Coast of Africa, and commonly called or known by the name and description of the Peninsula of *Sierra Leone*, as hath already by any grant, purchase, or cession from KING TOM, late Chief of *Sierra Leone*, or any other Kings, Princes, and Chiefs, having right therein, or otherwise vested in his Majesty, his heirs, and successors, with full power, liberty, and privilege to and for the said corporation to purchase of and from all Kings, Princes, and Chiefs, or other persons having right to make sale thereof, so much of the adjoining land as shall include the whole tract or district so commonly called or known by the name of the Peninsula of *Sierra Leone*, as aforesaid, as the same is bounded on the north by the river *Sierra Leone*, on the south by the river *Camaranca*, on the east by the river *Bunce*, and on the west by the sea; to hold the same, and the whole use, property, and possession of the said Peninsula, as well such part thereof as hath so been vested in his Majesty as aforesaid, as also such additional part so to be purchased by them under the authority of this act, and his Majesty's said grant unto the said corporation, their successors and assigns, upon such terms, conditions, and restrictions, to be inserted in the said grant, as his Majesty, his heirs and successors respectively, shall judge expedient.

40. That no proceedings under this act shall be quashed for want of form only.

41. That all actions, &c. shall be commenced within six months after the fact committed; and defendants may plead the general issue, and give the act and special matter in evidence.

42. That the act shall be a public act.

To the Honourable the COMMONS of GREAT BRITAIN,
in Parliament assembled;

The Humble PETITION of the undersigned MERCHANTS of
LIVERPOOL, trading to AFRICA, on behalf of themselves
and other Persons concerned in the said Trade,

SHEWETH,

THAT your Petitioners have observed in the Votes of your Honourable House, that an application hath been made by Robert Hunter, of the City of London, Merchant; Henry Thornton, of the said City, Esq. and Philip Sanfom, of the said City, Merchant, on behalf of themselves and other persons associated with them, for leave to bring in a Bill to make such Adventurers a Body Corporate, for the purpose of carrying on such Trade as is therein stated, by the name of *The Saint George's Bay Company*, and for granting to them, *the sole use, property, and possession* of a certain District, commonly called the Peninsula of *Sierra Leone*, as now vested in his Majesty, and for making further purchases, as therein mentioned:

That the River *Sierra Leone*, from its advantageous situation, the facility of its entrance, and security of its havens, offers a safe assylum in its commodious bays to ships of every size, though destitute of anchors and cables, which is too often the case, and is the only port in a range of at least 1600 miles of coast, where vessels exceeding the size of a long boat can enter at all seasons without a Pilot; consequently, it is of the utmost importance, not only to vessels trading immediately there, but to many others that require either repairs, or an occasional supply of wood, water, and provisions, in their passage to and from other parts of the Coast of Africa:

That *Sierra Leone* has ever been a free and open port to all European Nations trading to Africa, as it is now to them and the States of America also; and that any monopoly of this river, and adjacent country, must operate as a restriction to British subjects only; for in the Definitive Treaty of Peace and Friendship between our Most Sacred Majesty, and the Most Christian King, signed at Versailles on the 3d of September, 1783, after enumerating other Settlements in Africa, and the regulations concerning the same, in which *Sierra Leone* is not mentioned, the

12th Article declares; "As to the residue of the Coast
" of Africa, the English and French subjects shall conti-
" nue to resort thereto according to the usage which hath
" hitherto prevailed:"

That any exclusive grant will be an infringement of
the privileges of British subjects, since the Act of 25th of
GEORGE II. Cap. 31, enacts, "That it should or might
" be lawful for *all* his Majesty's subjects to trade and
" traffic to and from any port or place in Africa, between
" the port of *Sallee* in *South Barbary*, and the *Cape of*
" *Good Hope*, when, and at such times, and in such man-
" ner, and in and with such quantity of goods, wares, or
" merchandize, as he or they shall think fit, without any
" restraint whatsoever:"

That if the view of the Petitioners for such exclusive
grant, are only what they set forth; "To erect houses,
" warehouses, and places of security for the persons em-
" ployed in their service, to conduct a general trade and
" commerce to and with the Western Coast of Africa,
" and the interior Countries of that Continent;" every
requisite provision, as your Petitioners apprehend, is al-
ready granted to such persons, in common with the rest
of his Majesty's subjects, by the 28th Section of the afore-
said Act, which enacts, "That it shall and may be law-
" ful for any of his Majesty's subjects trading to Africa,
" for the security of their goods and slaves, *to erect houses*
" *and warehouses* under the protection of forts, or else-
" where, in any part of Africa, within the limits aforesaid,
" for the better carrying on his or their trade there, which
" houses and warehouses shall be the property of the per-
" son or persons who shall build the same, but shall not
" be disposed of, or let to any foreigner whatsoever."

That your Petitioners conceive, the persons applying
for such exclusive grant, are influenced rather by motives
of private interest, and the expectation of a lucrative mo-
nopoly, so repugnant to that spirit of commercial freedom
which characterizes the opinions of the present age, than
a regard to the general good; nor does it appear that such
persons are entitled, from any services done to the public,
or otherwise, to any extraordinary remuneration or public
favour, and particularly not in a way circumstanced like
the present, which would so very materially interfere with
an established system of commerce, in the quiet enjoy-
ment

ment of which your Petitioners have long remained uninterrupted.

That if the application be granted to the extent prayed for, it would exclude your Petitioners from the advantageous trade which they have hitherto carried on in the River *Sierra Leone*, and the intermediate country, from thence to the River *Camaranche* inclusively, and give to the persons so applying a monopoly of the Camwood Trade, enhance the price of that valuable commodity to the British manufacturer, and be in many other respects prejudicial to the commercial interests of this country.

That any monopoly must in its consequences raise the price of rice, and other provisions and necessaries, which have hitherto been furnished by the natives of that part of the Coast of Africa to the British shipping in great quantities, and at reasonable rates, and preclude his Majesty's subjects from the advantage of a free navigation and commerce there.

Your Petitioners therefore most humbly pray this Honourable House, that they may be heard by themselves, their Counsel, or Agents, against such Bill, and that the same may not pass into a law.

And your Petitioners shall ever pray, &c.

DETECTOR'S LETTERS.

LETTER I.

THE friends of our excellent constitution will rejoice with me, that the pretended advocates for the dignity of human nature, the rights of man, and universal philanthropy, have not succeeded in diverting a respectable majority of the House of Commons from the upright discharge of their duty. The calm voice of reason, the dictates of sound policy and common sense, have resisted, with convincing energy, the united efforts of the candidates for popularity and fame, whose eloquent and pathetic harangues, however well adapted to charm the ear and excite the passions, have not been able to mislead the understanding.

It gives me pleasure to observe, that there yet remains in our senate so much discernment as to distinguish plain truth from the most artfully disguised fiction; so much virtue as to preserve the real interests of our country from the ill effects of idle speculation; and that, after the utmost exertion of misapplied rhetoric and specious declamation, to destroy those rights which it was the duty of Parliament to protect, *one hundred and sixty-three patriots* were found to oppose *eighty-eight visionaries*.

Upon this occasion one cannot avoid marking the contrast between the present temper of the House of Commons, and that of former times, when the influence of a Minister was able to carry into effect any favourite scheme, however absurd and invasive of the rights of the nation; when the means used to remedy an evil were more grievous than the evil itself; when the majority of the people were oppressed for the convenience of the few; and when every thing he dictated was so speedily passed into a law, that it required more trouble to explain, amend, or repeal his blundering statutes, than to make them.

This visionary and dangerous policy; this fondness for innovation and experiment, subversive of old and well founded establishments; this fashionable trick of raising a name upon the ignorance, folly, or self-interest of mankind, have been productive of all the late calamities of this nation. This system of state-bungling has occasioned the separation of the major part of our colonies, the diminution of the revenue, and increase of our debts, to such a degree, that statesmen have descended to the tithing even of *anise and cummin*. These flagrant proofs of levity and inconsistency had degraded us in the political scale of empire, to a state the most despicable and humiliating.

And when, through a fortunate train of incidents, we are beginning to emerge from this disgraceful abyss, shall we, forgetful of our past follies, relapse into errors no less fatal to the nation? and, neglecting the interests of our native country, extend our humanity to distant regions, wantonly sacrificing at the shrine of humanity, property acquired by the industry of our fellow citizens, to gratify, at the expence of the remains of that commerce which our political alchymy hath yet left us, an airy pretended benevolence, destructive to Britons, but of no more use to those who are the objects of it, than the murder of a troop

troop of Africans to the *manes* of the grandee to which they are immolated.

Although the flame of sedition, kindled by the abolitionists, be smothered for the present, we have little reason to expect its speedy extinction. One of the most active of their leaders, the friend of Thomas Paine, professes that he cannot be happy while such a multitude of his fellow creatures are miserable, and declares he will exert himself in the cause of humanity, to the latest period of his life. The *man of the people*, too, has pledged himself to assist the Hon. Gentleman *opposite to him* in the good work. This redoubtable *coalition* has animated the drooping spirits of the *Old Jewry Club*; who, I observe by your paper of yesterday, are rallying their forces to renew the attack; in hopes that a more fortunate campaign will enable them, at least to sap the fortress which they could not carry by storm.

Be it my task to watch the motions of the reformers, to delineate some of their most conspicuous characters, developé their designs, detect their misrepresentations, and confute their falsehoods.

But having already extended this letter to sufficient length for diurnal publication, I shall prosecute the subject in a future paper.

DETECTOR.

LETTER II.

AS I am not solicitous about the regularity of the Essays which I purpose, from time to time, to lay before the public by means of your paper, I scruple not to adapt them to the pressure of the moment, by taking under consideration such temporary matter as requires immediate animadversion.

Of this kind is the Bill, published in your Paper of Monday, and now before the House of Commons, for incorporating certain persons under the name of the *Saint George's Bay Company*.

The abolitionists having succeeded, as they thought, in annihilating a valuable commerce, prematurely throw off the mask, and petition Parliament to allow them to reap the fruits of their labours. "We will not deal in Slaves"

say

say those humane Gentlemen, "but we shall be glad to have a *slice of land*, (only about 1000 square miles) which cannot be missed; especially as the inhabitants have been so much thinned by the detestable Slave Merchants. We will thus have it in our power to explore the interior parts of Africa, and monopolizing its valuable productions. The consent of the natives is of no consequence, nor is it material to enquire whether this country has the smallest title to the sovereignty of the spot we ask. If we can but prevail on Parliament to sanction our encroachments, who will dare to oppose us? Having established ourselves on this Continent, what a charming prospect! India is nothing to it. The troops of that country become too knowing, and the expence of going to war insupportable. But in Africa, we can make alliances and set the natives at variance upon very reasonable terms: a few beads, shells, and looking-glasses, will do the business. The thing is plain. If the Captain of a Slave Ship, as we have made the people believe, can set the natives by the ears to procure a cargo of *Slaves*, surely we, by means of our capital of 500,000*l.* can do it more effectually to procure *land*: and if land, the *gold mines*, the *ivory*, the *spices*, &c. become our own.

"But if this *exclusive trade* should not answer our expectations, we shall, at least, enjoy the satisfaction of the dog in the manger, by the interdiction of all those who will not become subscribers. Should the present turn out in the end to be another *South-Sea scheme*, we who are in the secret will derive considerable advantage even from its downfall; for having already wound up the enthusiasm of the people to a proper pitch, by the fascinating picture we have drawn of an interior commerce with Africa, we will easily obtain subscriptions from all quarters. Our joint stock being thus completed, we will fit out a fleet, employ a set of crimps to raise an army, take possession of our new acquired dominions, and carry all before us.

"Our agents shall be instructed to transmit to England the most flattering accounts of the new colony, accompanied with a few samples of the rich commodities of the country. This will inflame the desire of the public to participate in such a lucrative trade, and of

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 "accompanied with a few samples of the rich commodi-
 "ties of the country. This will inflame the desire of the
 "public to participate in such a lucrative trade, and of
 "course

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"course will prodigiously raise the price of our stock;
 "and when the bubble becomes, by these means, inflated
 "to its utmost stretch, and ready to burst, we will artfully
 "sell out, and let JOHN BULL repent of his folly and
 "credulity at leisure."

If any of my readers conceive this to be a fanciful description of the views of the *innovators*, I would have them consider, that things which have been, may be. The continent of Africa is certainly an object of speculation not inferior to the *South-Sea*, or the *River Mississippi*; and nobody can deny that the present age abounds with *visionaries*, no less romantic, though perhaps inferior to abilities to a *KNIGHT or a †LAW.

DETECTOR.

LETTER III.

IT was natural to expect that the different Squadrons which have marshalled themselves under the banner of General Sharpe, should pour forth their acknowledgments to the illustrious assertors of "*BRITISH justice and humanity*" (thanks to the *Old Jewry Club* for this distinction, for I did not know that these virtues were local) and particularly to the "*pigmy champion with a sounding name*," who, I find, also, has been dubbed L. L. D. by a learned and pious Northern University. It seems more difficult to account for the encomiums bestowed on him by a Bristol writer, under the signature of *Verax*, who after qualifying the story of *burning in effigy*, by calling it *plebeian triumph*, says, "he is authorized to assure the public, that in no city in Great Britain is Mr. Wilberforce more highly respected than in Bristol, even by those who have not been able to think *with him* on the late very important question." The city of Bristol, to be sure, is extremely obliged to this gentleman, for having rescued from oblivion the anecdote which accuses the inhabitants

* The accomptant of the South-Sea Company, who decamped when the bubble burst.

† The projector of the Mississippi scheme.

habitants of selling their children to the Irish. Perhaps *Verax's* veneration proceeds from the same motive which is ascribed to certain Pagans, who are said to worship the Devil.

In the prosecution of my task, I wished to avoid descending to personalities; but the conduct of some of the pretended advocates for humanity has been so outrageous, that it becomes necessary to retort the illiberal charges which they have made, particularly as well as generally, against the gentlemen who have stood forth to oppose their novel and pernicious speculations.

In the infancy of this mischievous pursuit, our reformers were at a loss for materials to work upon, till they found means to bring before the public tribunal the men who had been engaged in that commerce which they were about to destroy. They condemned by the lump, and in the most opprobrious and virulent terms, the trade and the traders; but instead of producing proofs of the alledged enormities, the parties aspersed and vilified were called upon to disprove the accusations that had been brought against them by their calumniators; and their views were promoted by the moderate and candid, who wished for information on a subject so little understood.

In compliance with this wish, and in vindication of their injured honour, a number of gentlemen, consisting of the African Committee, the Governors of Forts, and Masters of Ships, were examined, first by the Privy Council, and afterwards by a Committee of the House of Commons, and their testimony was corroborated by that of many eminent naval and military officers, together with the most intelligent West India merchants and planters.

To this body of evidence was opposed that of certain persons, the respectability and good intentions of some of whom I will not call in question; but it is notorious, that a considerable number of them were procured, and some of them are now subsisted, by means of subscriptions collected by the Rev. Mr. C. and his coadjutors of the Old Jewry.

From the acknowledgment of the candour of his opponents made by Mr. Wilberforce in the introduction to his long-winded speech, one would have been led to presume he would have paid a little more respect to their evidence; but consistency was disregarded in his oration. Their private

vate character, he says, he does not impeach ; but asserts that they are surrounded with an *African atmosphere*, and have an *African logic* peculiar to themselves. It may be retorted with equal force, that the partizans of abolition are encompassed with a *Methodistical atmosphere*, and have a *logic* and *casuistry* no less characteristic ; well calculated for Tower-hill or Moorfields, but intolerable in an enlightened assembly.

By this criterion we are enabled to judge of Mr. Wilberforce's celebrated speech---a turgid, verbose, incoherent rhapsody---deficient in every requisite necessary for a well digested oration, and remarkable only for its prolixity.

The speech of Mr. W. Smith was better connected, and well delivered, but equally marked with prejudice, calumny, and falsehood. To make good the latter charge, we need only advert to what he says of the slaves of antiquity, who, he asserts, were better treated than those of the West Indies. I shall in a future letter produce the most authentic proof from history, of the contrary. At present I shall only take notice of what fell from him respecting the connection between the African and East-India trade. On this subject, he said, " that we exported " to Africa one half of all the gunpowder which we exported to all the world ; and saltpetre, which was an ingredient, was procured from the East Indies. This " was the *only* reason why it could be said there was any " sort of connection between the African and East India " trade. Great Britain exported annually to Africa " 1,300,000 lbs. of gunpowder for the purpose of peace " and civilization on the Coast ! "

The fact is, the African merchant takes from the India warehouses, piece goods, cawries, and other articles, to the amount of near 200,000l. annually ; and as to the use made of gunpowder and guns, every body conversant with the trade knows, that the major part of those articles are employed at festivals and funerals ; and as a proof that very little gunpowder is made use of in war, it is certain that ball makes no part of any African cargo ; nor has all the adverse evidence been able to produce an instance of a Negro being exposed to sale with a gun-shot wound.

DETECTOR.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

FROM among the many frightful stories with which the industry of Parson C--- had furnished the Committee of the House of Commons, Mr. Smith selected one, the recital of which produced a laugh at his expence. "I envy not," said the gentleman, with a sarcastic grin, "the feelings of those who can laugh at such a story."--- It was the laugh of indignation, at his suppression of the circumstances which totally destroyed its credibility.

An abridgement of the evidence had been prepared and dispersed among the Members; and the story now alluded to, had been mutilated and made fit for Mr. Smith's purpose. A child was said to have *taken suck*, and would not eat; upon which the Captain flogged and otherwise treated it with the most savage barbarity. Among other punishments, which appear by the original evidence to have been inflicted, but which have been suppressed in the abridgement, and in Mr. Smith's speech, a log of wood of 13lbs. weight was suspended by its neck. An unlucky question happened to be put by one of the members of the Committee to the evidence who related this horrible story. "How old was the child?" He was answered, "nine months." "Did the Captain prevent it from sucking the mother?" "No; he always encouraged it to suck."

Similar exaggerated and incredible stories have been produced by the various declaimers who have espoused the cause of *freedom and humanity*---a cause which has united our most distinguished orators on both sides of the House, and engaged them to display their eloquence in behalf of their suffering brethren; but the minor orators, as was observed by Mr. Drake---the dwarfs---the pigmies have, upon this occasion, pleaded with effect; and the *rights of Britons* have triumphed over the *rights of Men*.

Let not this temporary victory put us off our guard.--- It behoves every true patriot, every real friend of order, peace and good government, to detect and frustrate the designs of the demagogues and levellers, who, under the specious pretext of exalting the degraded part of human nature to that rank and dignity to which it is entitled by birth-right, are endeavoring to overturn the constitution, and introduce anarchy and confusion, with all their dire attendants,

attendants. The *Abolition of Slavery* is but an underplot, in which a Parson is both Manager and principal Actor--- the *Jack Cade* of the day---who is preparing the unguarded people of these realms to abet the designs of those restless and turbulent characters, who are the curse of this country.

Happily for Britain, the late debates in the House of Commons have been instrumental in awakening the vigilance of patriots. The alarm of Treason is sounded: Be it ours to prevent the threatened mischief, by hunting down the conspirators, however dignified, who have long been meditating projects big with the ruin of their country. In confidence that this will be effected by others, whose particular duty it is to preserve the repose of the nation, I shall now, according to promise, quote a few passages from history, to shew how Slaves were treated by the ancients.

---“ Upon non-payment of the Tax called *Metoian*, the delinquent was seized by the Tax-masters, carried to market, and exposed to sale by the *Phalerei*, which were Revenue-officers. The philosopher Xenocrates underwent this fate; but was redeemed by Demetrius Phalereus.”

---“ The second sort of servants were wholly in the power of their Lords, who had as good a title to them as their lands and Estates, of which they were esteemed a part. They were employed in the worst and most wretched drudgeries;---pinched---beaten---starved---tormented---without appeal to superior powers; and punished even with death!”

---“ Slaves were not permitted to communicate at the worship of the Deities, being accounted prophane.”

---“ Their education was quite different from that of free-born children”---“ they were taught in the same way they used to tame wild beasts, namely, stripes and the cruelest severity.”

“ Sometimes they were racked upon the wheel, to extort a confession, when suspected to have been accessory to any villainous design.”

---“ The common way of correcting them was to scourge them with whips---if a glutton, his belly must suffer---if a tell-tale, his tongue must be cut out---

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"The common way of stigmatizing, was by burning the member with a red-hot iron."---

---"This was the condition of Slaves in Athens, which, though deplorable enough, yet, if compared with that of their fellow sufferers in other cities, it seems easy, at least tolerable."---

---"In Sparta the ground was tilled, and all sorts of trades managed by the Helots, whilst their masters, gentlemen-like, spent their time in dancing, feasting, and hunting:---but the being condemned to such drudgeries for life, had been supportable, had not they also been treated in the most barbarous manner, abused beyond the patience of men, and often murdered without having committed any fault, and without any shew of justice."---

---"At Athens they had several places in the Forum, for the sale of Slaves."---

---"The Chians are reported to have been the first that gave money for them;---before they were exchanged for commodities.---Homer's Heroes are said to have exchanged their Captives for provisions."---

-----"Cato, when his servants grew old and unfit for labour, though they had been faithful and had spent their youth and strength in labouring for him, would not be at the charge of maintaining them, but turned them away, or let them starve in his own family."---

Numberless other instances might be extracted from history, of the deplorable situation of Slaves among the Greeks and Romans, beyond comparison more wretched than in the Sugar Colonies. What then are we to think of the barefaced assertion of Mr. Smith, made in the face of the House of Commons---"that their situation was much more comfortable among the Ancients;---that they were treated as *familiares*, &c." when he must have known that he laid himself open to detection by every School-boy?

I am as ready to condemn the inhuman, systematical practice of the Ancients, as the particular instances of cruelty which may have been perpetrated by some individuals among the Moderns. But in taking a review of the conduct of either, facts ought to be adhered to, and the frailty of human nature ought to be attended to. Every approach

proach towards a state of perfection is desirable ; but we are not to do evil that good may come of it ; nor risk the peace and safety of a people for the sake of indulging a speculative theory.

I purpose, in my next, to give you my sentiments on the monopoly attempted by those who call themselves the *Saint George's Bay Company*.

LETTER V.

UNDER the pretext of establishing a *general* trade and commerce from this country with the western coast of Africa, and with the interior kingdoms of that continent, a company is proposed, unlimited in its duration, exclusive as to its possessions, and territorial in its chief object ; with indefinite powers over the whole tract specified in their bill, and over the rivers, creeks, bays, and harbours connected with it ; and consequently to have and to hold a complete controul over, and monopoly of, the trade, culture, and produce of the Peninsula of Sierra Leone.

But the *novelty* of the requisition, and the advantages which individuals may expect to derive from it, can never justify such an unprecedented and extraordinary grant ; for,

1st. The Law Officers of the Crown do not appear to have been consulted upon the legal provisions that may be requisite for securing to the British empire the due advantages (if any) of a British colony in Africa ; nor does the bill itself offer any regulations on this subject, or propose any plan respecting its civil or military government.

2nd. The important privileges belonging to a British colony are likely to be abused, and its corresponding duties to be ill fulfilled, especially with regard to contraband, in the situation referred to ; where no establishment of a custom-house appears to be provided for.

3d. The rights of citizenship, and many other critical circumstances, in a situation so peculiar as that of this Peninsula, have been left equally unnoticed.

4th. A settlement upon the plan proposed in the bill might, by an unfair and unqualified intrusion of rival products, infringe that great principle of reciprocal monopoly, upon

upon which all regulations of trade between the parent country and its West India colonies, have been originally founded, and by which alone these colonies have prospered so greatly to the advantage of Great Britain. The opinion of the legislature on this head, has been unequivocally expressed, by excluding from the British market, except on payment of the highest foreign duties, sugars coming from the American continent, though raised by British subjects on their plantations on the Musquito shore. Similar principles directed the proceedings of the legislature respecting rice and tobacco, whilst the American colonies were connected with this country.

Arguments equally cogent, may be urged for preventing the *St. George's Bay Company* from acquiring an extensive territory and an exclusive port; especially too as that port is the only one in a range of no less than 1600 miles of sea coast. The mere purposes of trade with the natives of Africa, do not require such extraordinary advantages, since a very small spot of land is sufficient for the erection of a factory and magazines; and the utility of a port does not require that it should be made *exclusive*, but only concurrent.

Territorial objects must inevitably divert the capital of the company from the pursuit of trade, which is its avowed object; unless it be supposed that the soil is to remain dormant in their hands, or that they expect to derive a benefit by selling or letting it out to individual adventurers: To which benefit however, if the right of Great Britain to the territory in question was ever to be established, and which can only be founded upon equivocal negotiations with the uncivilized natives, the public alone, is, in fact, entitled.

The first characteristic of a chartered company (which is the chief pretext of the present candidates for one) is to create a capital joint stock on the one hand, and put limits to the responsibility of the subscribers, with respect to the debts of the company, on the other; and where monopolizes have been superadded, they have naturally, under wise governments, been the price of valuable considerations given for the same, continued for a short term, and resumable at pleasure, if found unprofitable to the realm; or they were intended as an incitement to hazardous enterprizes, where competitors were wanting on
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other terms; which, in this adventurous age, is scarcely to be expected, and is by no means the case in the present instance, as a vigorous commerce is now, and has been long, carried on in the parts in question, consequently the company should wave their exclusive pretensions, and admit of concurrents, especially in regard of a sea port which nature seems to design for a public benefit; to act otherwise, would be to contract and stifle a trade which is professed in the bill to be "*general* in its nature, and highly beneficial to the manufactories, and other trading interests of Great Britain."

Whatever objections may have been entertained of late, respecting the utility of colonies, such objections extend with double force to a settlement in Africa; the old colonies are establishments which have already taken root, and of which it is now only necessary to reap the fruits; they are insular, and consequently easily defended by the great bulwark of this empire, namely, its navy; for the same reason also, they can more easily be guarded from contraband; and the title by which we possess them, is now universally recognized by foreign nations: on the other hand, the success of the projected establishment in Africa is at best uncertain, especially under the management of an exclusive company, an experiment which has already failed in that quarter of the world. The defence of it likewise, as being inland and extensive, must also be difficult and burthen some; illicit trade from the same cause may be easily carried on, and the evil effects of the contraband is likely to be extended to other parts of the empire, communicating with the new settlement; and lastly, the jealousy of foreign powers will inevitably be excited, by a transaction so flagrantly injurious to their interests and claims, as well as contrary to the treaty subsisting with France; which provides, "that its subjects shall resort thereto according to the usage which has hitherto prevailed."

The founders of the colony of Rhode Island in North America, professed to have in view "the godly edifying of themselves, together with the gaining over and conversion of the poor ignorant natives, whereby it was hoped that there might in time be laid a foundation of happiness to all America, and the best and greatest security to sovereignty and true loyalty;" professions which

which the event did not justify, especially with regard to obedience to our commercial law; and a similar issue may be expected from the present project of the St. George's Bay Company, since the shares of the capital stock and the property of the territory may pass into the hands of foreigners by sale, or by the death of the present subscribers; there being no provisions in the bill to prevent it; and though any intention to deal in slaves, or to employ them in their territory, is disclaimed by the present patrons of the scheme; yet, as the temptations are strong, and the opportunities easy, their successors will find very little difficulty in evading this prohibition, which may be rendered nugatory by crossing a river; where slaves may be bought, sold, hired or employed at pleasure; and the produce of their labour furnish the most considerable part of the exports of the new colony; which may be the more easily effected, as there is not a single penalty annexed to the breach of any one clause in the bill.

In my next I shall, through the channel of your paper, communicate to the public some further remarks and information on this subject.

DETECTOR.

LETTER VI.

IF the views of the intended St. George's Bay Company be really what they profess in the preamble of their bill, namely, "That of carrying on a *general* trade and commerce with the several interior countries of Africa which have not hitherto been explored by Europeans,"---a less eligible situation than that of Sierra Leone could scarcely have been pitched upon; and the very circumstance of having made choice of it, is sufficient to convince any person that the establishment of a trade from thence with the interior countries of Africa, though it be the avowed, cannot be the real object of the intended company; an inspection of the map convinces us, that the Sierra Leone Mountains are nearly the most prominent point of the Western Coast of Africa. And neither the river of Sierra Leone, nor any of its branches, can be ascended even in a small rowing boat 30 miles from the sea.

sea. If easy access to the interior parts of Africa be the object of the adventurers, it is reasonable to presume, that instead of fixing on a part of the country so remote, and in every other respect so disadvantageous, they would have chosen to approach the intended scene of action by a route more favourable for their purpose.

The best possible communication, and the readiest way to transport merchandize through nations where there are neither roads nor beasts of burthen, is certainly not by land, but by water. And the adventurers may avail themselves of this obvious mode, without interfering with other people's trades, or being themselves interrupted by those who visit Africa with views different from theirs. The navigation of the Sierra Leone by boats, is confined to the distance of about 30 miles from the sea; but the river Gambia, whose mouth is not more distant from the centre of Africa than Sierra Leone, may be navigated by vessels of seventy or eighty tons for 1000 miles, or up to Baraconda. Thither they may transport their merchandize by water in the same vessels that took them from England, and after a short carriage round the Falls, the goods may be transported still further into the country by means of canoes, and the expence of land carriage avoided.

It rests with the would-be company to explain why they have overlooked these advantages, and given the preference to Sierra Leone; and it is incumbent on them to remove, if they can, the suspicion that they have other objects in view, besides those which they avow.

So large a capital as they propose to invest (500,000l. sterling) could scarcely be employed in trading to the Peninsula of Sierra Leone, perhaps not immediately at the more suitable situation of Baraconda. But not to limit the industry of these gentlemen, other situations can be pointed out, from whence they can carry on their approaches to the interior of Africa by water, far beyond any thing that Sierra Leone offers them; for it appears by the evidence of James Morley, given before the Committee on the 12th of May, 1790, page 150, that he had been 300 or 400 miles up the river Nazareth, and above 200 miles up the river Gaboon.

What has preceded proves, I hope, satisfactorily, that the Peninsula of Sierra Leone is not the most eligible situation for the purposes avowed by the intended company,

as far as relates to their own interest. I shall now shew how a perseverance in their present plan would interfere with the interests and rights of others.

The River of Sierra Leone has always been a port free and open to all European nations trading to Africa, and it now is to them and to the Americans also. The French right to trade is clearly ascertained by the 12th article of our last Definitive Treaty of Peace; and any privilege or monopoly granted to the St. George's Bay Company, could only operate against their fellow-subjects, and would be disregarded by our commercial rivals of every nation.

The Sierra Leone is the only river in a range of at least 1600 miles of that coast, into which vessels exceeding the size of a long-boat can enter at all seasons, without a pilot. This river, from its advantageous situation, the facility of its entrance, and the security of its havens, offers a safe asylum in its commodious bays to ships of every size, though destitute of anchors and cables; consequently it is of the utmost importance not only to vessels trading immediately there, but to many others that require either repairs or an occasional supply of wood, water, and provisions, in their passage to and from other parts of the coast of Africa.

A grant therefore of the sole use, property, and possession of the only shore of this river to which vessels can resort for a supply of these necessities, must be highly injurious to merchants trading to that part of Africa; for though the Sierra Leone be a large river, and is 10 or 12 miles wide at the mouth, yet the north shore is so shallow that ships cannot approach it; the anchorage and depth of water requisite for them is close on that side only, which is the object of the St. George's Bay Company. A monopoly, or exclusive grant of that shore, would either wholly deprive those merchants who are not members of that company, of the supplies which they had been accustomed to receive there, or subject them to an additional expence, by getting them through the medium of the company, instead of the natives; and would exclude our merchants from the advantageous trade which they have hitherto carried on in the river Sierra Leone, and the intermediate country from thence to the river Camaranca inclusively, and secure to the company a monopoly of the camwood trade, which is procured chiefly in that district.

Till

Till the present æra of reformation, it has been generally allowed, that there are but two cases where a monopoly or exclusive company can be of any benefit to the State; which are, to open a new trade, or to revive a declining commerce. The petitioners are endeavouring to make a third: for they and their adherents have done, and are doing, all in their power to abolish a flourishing trade; and having in their opinion succeeded, come to Parliament, with a petition to allow them to establish an exclusive company on its ruins. But surely the legislature will not indulge such an unreasonable request, especially while they have in remembrance the Old African Company, to whom the nation thought it expedient to pay 112,142l. 3s. 3d. to save them from bankruptcy, and rescue the trade from destruction, by laying it open to *all* his Majesty's subjects.

The Peninsula of Sierra Leone is an appendage of the kingdom of Quioia, and is governed by a Viceroy, appointed by the King and Council of Quioia; no alienation therefore made by any particular Viceroy can, by the usage and policy of Africa, bind his successors in perpetuity; nor can any sale of the district in question affect the rights of the King of Quioia. The purchase therefore of this settlement for the Black Poor, made by Captain Thompson, of the Nautilus, from King Tom, the late Viceroy, must be invalid, as well for the reasons above stated, as because King James, the present Viceroy, having received no share of the price paid by Captain Thompson, refuses to ratify this act of his predecessor, and has actually quarrelled with the new settlers, sold some of them, and drove the rest out of the country.

On the departure of Capt. Thompson, the situation of the new colonists soon became extremely wretched; for instead of improving the advantages which the British government had possessed them of, and turning their thoughts towards agriculture and other useful arts, they sold the tools, stores, provisions, and even muskets that had been provided for them; nor were they ever, during their residence at this settlement, at the pains to raise a sufficient quantity of rice to subsist them for three months. In place of industry, their whole time and study was employed in purloining from one another, and holding Courts for settling disputes, according to the code of laws that had been put into their hands by Mr. Granville Sharpe.

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These litigations were generally productive of fraud and oppression, by which the more industrious were always the sufferers: nor were the evils confined to themselves, but extended to the masters and crews of vessels, some of whom they detained on shore under various pretences, and obliged to ransom themselves at a considerable expence.

In this state of warfare and depredation with each other, the whites and the natives, did this new colony live at the arrival of the Pomona frigate, in November 1779, to whose commander, Captain Savage, they complained of the treatment they had received from King James and his people. This King James refusing to come on board to reply to the charges against him, a Lieutenant, with a Serjeant, a party of Marines, and a boat's crew armed, were sent in quest of him. He chose to keep out of their way, but on their return they were attacked by his people; Lieut. Duncan, the Serjeant, and one Private were killed, and several others wounded, before they could get on board. This affray did not better the situation of these new settlers, who now became extremely disgusted with their situation, but were utterly at a loss where to seek refuge. They could not look to Bence Island for protection, having formerly broken into and robbed the factory there. However, Mr. Bowie, the chief agent, endeavoured to mediate a peace between them and the natives; but King James was inexorable, and would allow them but three days to depart; and Mr. Bowie, to prevent a farther effusion of blood, sent boats to take away the miserable remains of the colony, which was reduced from near 500 to 87 persons; and before the whole were embarked, the natives set fire to the place and burnt it down.

Having thus stated the destructive consequence that attended the late settlement at Sierra Leone, it appears that the St. George's Bay Company are asking from Parliament the grant of a territory, neither in the possession of, nor subject to, the authority of the British government.

That the natives, and perhaps the French, would, in all probability, resist the encroachments of the new company, and reduce them to the necessity of making a settlement by force:

That this would occasion such a loss of lives and property, as could not be compensated by any advantage accruing to this country from such a settlement. And,

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That the tragical fate of the late colony, gives no encouragement to repeat the like experiment:

DETECTOR.

Extract from Mr. WILBERFORCE's Speech in the House of Commons, May 13th, 1789, on the Question of the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

"IN opening the nature of the Slave Trade, I need only observe, that it is found, by experience, to be just such as every man, who uses his reason, would infallibly conclude it to be. For my own part, so clearly am I convinced of the mischiefs inseparable from it, that I should hardly want any further evidence than my own mind would furnish, by the most simple deductions. Facts, however, are now laid before the House. A report has been made by his Majesty's Privy Council, which, I trust, every Gentleman has read, and which ascertains the Slave Trade to be just such in practice as we know, from theory, that it must be. What should we suppose must naturally be the consequence of our carrying on a Slave Trade with Africa? With a country, vast in its extent, not utterly barbarous, but civilized in a very small degree? Does any one suppose a Slave Trade would *help* their civilization? That Africa would *profit* by such an intercourse? Is it not plain, that she must *suffer* from it? That civilization must be checked; that her barbarous manners must be made more barbarous; and that the happiness of her millions of inhabitants must be prejudiced by her intercourse with Britain? Does not every one see, that a Slave Trade, carried on around her coasts, must carry violence and desolation to her very centre? That, in a continent, just emerging from barbarism, if a Trade in Men is established---if her men are all converted into goods, and become commodities that can be bartered, it follows, they must be subject to ravage just as goods are; and this too, at a period of civilization, when there is no protecting legislature to defend this their only sort of property, in the same manner as the rights of property are maintained by the legislature of every civilized country.

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"We see then, in the nature of things, how easily all the practices of Africa are to be accounted for. Her kings are never compelled to war, that we can hear of, by public principles,---by national glory---still less by the love of their people. In Europe it is the extension of commerce, the maintenance of national honor, or some great public object, that is ever the motive to war with every monarch; but, in Africa, it is the personal *avarice* and *sensuality* of their kings: these two vices of avarice and sensuality, (the most powerful and predominant in natures thus corrupt) we tempt, we stimulate in all these African Princes, and we depend upon these vices for the very maintenance of the Slave Trade. Does the king of Barbossin want brandy*? He has only to send his troops, in the night-time, to burn and desolate a village; the captives will serve as commodities, that may be bartered with the British trader. What a striking view of the wretched state of Africa does the tragedy of Calabar furnish! Two towns, formerly hostile, had settled their differences, and by an inter-marriage among their chiefs, had each pledged themselves to peace; but the Trade in Slaves was prejudiced by such pacifications, and it became, therefore, the policy of our traders to renew the hostilities. This, their policy, was soon put in practice, and the scene of carnage which followed was such, that it is better, perhaps, to refer Gentlemen to the Privy Council's Report, than to agitate their minds by dwelling on it.

"The Slave Trade, in its very nature, is the source of such kind of tragedies, nor has there been a single person, almost, before the Privy Council, who does not add something, by his testimony, to the mass of evidence upon this point. Some, indeed, of these Gentlemen, and particularly the Delegates from Liverpool, have endeavoured to reason down this plain principle; some have palliated it, but there is not one, I believe, who does not, more or less, admit it. Some, nay most, I believe, have admitted the Slave Trade to be the chief cause of wars in Africa. Mr. Penny§ has called it the *concurrent* cause---some con-

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* Vide Dr. Spaarman's evidence before the Privy Council.

§ Liverpool Delegate.

less it to be *sometimes* the cause; but argue, that it cannot often be so.---Here I must make one observation, which, I hope, may be done, without offence to any one, and which I do, once for all, though it applies equally to many other evidences upon this subject. I mean to lay it down, as my principle, that evidences, and especially *interested* evidences, are not to be the judges of the *argument*. In matters of *fact*, of which they speak, I admit their competency; I mean not to suspect their credibility, with respect to any thing they see or hear, or themselves personally know; but, in reasoning about *causes and effects*, I hold them to be totally incompetent. So far, therefore, from submitting to their conclusions, in this respect, I utterly discard them. I take their premises readily and fairly; but, *upon* these premises, I must judge for myself: and the House, I trust---nay, I perfectly well know, will, in like manner judge for itself. Confident assertions, therefore, not of facts, but of the *supposed consequences* of facts, however pressed by the Liverpool Delegates, or any other interested persons; go for nothing in my estimation."

Extract from Mr. Penny's Evidence, before the Lords of the Committee of Council, chap. 2d, Page 23d.

Mr. Penny being asked "whether he did not conceive there would be fewer wars in this part of the country, if the profit of making Slaves was not one object to induce them to make war?" replied; this may possibly be a concurrent cause, but he never heard it avowed. Fear, ambition, interest, and resentment are supposed to be the causes. He rather considers the making Slaves as the effect, though it may sometimes be a concurrent cause. He is fully persuaded this concurrent cause existed with equal force, previous to the European nations having any commerce with Guinea. Yet, he acknowledges at the present period, the articles of trade brought from Europe, constitute what the Africans most value.

"But as wealth, or any supposed good that influences the minds of men, is undoubtedly comparative, he therefore infers, that the inferior manufactures of Africa, which it possessed previous to its having any commerce with the Europeans

Europeans (which inferior manufactures consisted of cotton and grass cloth, and ornaments of gold and ivory) at that remote period when the Africans could not have an idea of any thing more perfect or desirable, were certainly as much an incentive to rouse them to war as the European commodities can possibly be now, when become common and familiar among them.

"There are also native Slaves in this country; three fourths of the inhabitants are Slaves; domestic Slavery is very prevalent in this country, as well in the Mahometan towns as in the Pagans. These domestic Slaves are never sold but for crimes. They are tried for their crimes; and the number of Slaves is so great, that the government would be afraid of committing any act of injustice, for fear of a revolt."

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 best and greatest) and ornaments of gold and silver, &c.
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